PANEL, WOOD & Solid Surface

Issue No. 221/222 October/November 2026

New colours, textures and finishes from Decorative Panels Lamination

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TPgo from Travis Perkins Managed Services

SOCIAL HOUSING providers are increasingly seeing the benefits of having interconnected apps and data tools, allowing them to streamline operations and make informed decisions, according to Travis Perkins Managed Services (TPMS).



TPMS is a leading supplier of building products and materials to the social housing sector, supporting housing associations and local authorities across the country. In 2020, TPMS launched TPgo, the first of what would become a suite of products designed to streamline operations for social housing providers, helping to improve efficiencies, ensure repairs can be made first time, and reduce costs.

Users of the suite have been rising steadily, with the largest increase in the pivotal TPgo Data platform, which transforms how customers access back-end information and key performance indicators.

TPgo Data provides a comprehensive and dynamic source of data that gives customers unparalleled visibility of business intelligence data, including ordering and invoicing, and more than 7,750 users from across 82 organisations are now using the system.

Developed originally from a van stock app, the TPgo suite has been built from the ground up to meet the growing and changing needs of its customers. Over the last five years, the platform has continued to evolve into a comprehensive stock management and data analytics platform, and includes a range of applications: from TPgo Data, to a dedicated TPgoOrder and Spares app, and TPgo SelfServe, which provides operatives with 24/7 access to materials and can be set up in convenient locations.

Maria Walding, head of continuous improvement at Travis Perkins Managed Services, said: "Over the last five years, we've seen a really significant rise in the number of customers that have onboarded to the TPgo suite.

"Having a suite of interconnected apps means that customers have an unparalleled view of their organisation's data, from transactional information, to ensuring that vans are fully stocked with everything an operative needs. This helps operatives to save a huge amount of time that would otherwise be spent travelling to branches to pick up materials. In turn, this has a knock-on reduction on emissions and enables operatives to spend more time delivering improvements to tenants' homes.

"TPgo helps to optimise workforce efficiencies, enabling operatives to deliver a better service to their tenants. The digital suite responds to customers' needs and transforms the traditional role of a builders merchant, while revolutionising materials management. We're already looking to the future to determine where we might be able to go in the next five years".

Beyond the data platform, TPMS has opened dedicated service counters in 18 Travis Perkins branches and launched three managed service hubs for the sole use of TPMS customers.

The company is also rolling out TPgo SelfServe units, which are autonomous, secure materials stores. Operatives use a PIN code to access the units, which can be housed in existing, unused rooms or in stand-alone shipping containers positioned close to sites, which is a particularly useful option for more rural-based organisations.

TPMS has invested in a mobile demonstration unit, the TPgogogo van, which allows the company to showcase the suite to operatives, facilitating adoption and providing tangible space for the team to demonstrate the platform's benefits directly to operatives.

Maria continued: "It can be really difficult to visualise some of the benefits that can be achieved through the TPgo suite, so we developed the van as a mobile exhibition, allowing us to run frontline operatives through the system and show them first hand the kind of things they can do using the suite."

Travis Perkins Managed Services
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Order quote and check service by Cyncly

CYNCLY, a leading global provider of software and content solutions that help make amazing spaces for living, has extended its partnership with kitchen manufacturer Omega to support the launch of the new Winner-powered Omega Order and Quote Check Service.

Utilising Cyncly's industry leading Winner Flex software, the groundbreaking Omega Order and Quote Check Service demonstrates both brands' commitment to helping customers thrive. It has been devised to provide retailers, particularly those new to the manufacturer, with more support and guidance during the designing, quoting and ordering process at no extra cost.

The fast, intuitive service helps retailers around the world to optimise their designs and reduce avoidable, and potentially costly, quoting and ordering errors to boost profitability. The service enables retailers to export designs they have created in Winner Flex and send them to an Omega expert who will review the project and look for ways in which it can be enhanced. Improvements and refinements are worked on together in real-time to create a more collaborative partnership between Omega and its retailers and to provide trade customers with more confidence specifying Omega products.



The new Winner-powered Omega Order and Quote Check Service is believed to be a first for the UK market and has been instrumental in helping Omega grow its dealer network and launch its new In Frame collection.

"The ability to share and transfer designs between Omega and our retail partners creates significant efficiencies and improves collaboration," said Ashley Gerrard, design operations manager at Omega. "The Omega Order and Quote Check Service helps retailers gain confidence in specifying Omega products, reduces the risk of avoidable errors and protects both their margins and customer experience. It allows retailers to benefit from additional support while they build their product knowledge and familiarity with our ranges."

Alex Ainge, Cyncly's solutions group senior director, said: ""We're delighted to extend our partnership with Omega, helping them attract and support new and existing customers in innovative ways. Not only does Winner enable Omega to foster strong, collaborative relationships with its new customers right from the get-go, but it can help retailers become more familiar with Omega's comprehensive product portfolio even quicker and, of course, become fluent in the software's considerable design capabilities."

Cyncly ● www.cyncly.com

Carbon calculator tool from Travis Perkins

CUSTOMERS of what is believed to be the UK's largest builder's merchant, Travis Perkins and its associated companies are set to benefit from a brand-new carbon calculator tool that will help to deliver their Scope 3 reporting.

Scope 3 measures all indirect greenhouse gas emissions in a supply chain and downstream categories, from sourcing the raw materials for a product, through manufacturing to the point of delivery to the customer, ensuring full traceability.

However, there are changes on the horizon and from January 2027 the FCA may make it a requirement that listed companies disclose all embodied carbon throughout the supply chain, with expectation that private companies will follow suit in 2028.



Phil Monkman.

Until now providing Scope 3 data has been challenging due to the lack of standardised measurement and inaccuracy of information. This has meant a significant amount of back-office time was required to convert all materials to a single, comparable measurement. Weight of materials is mapped in tonnes and kilograms, and a precise CO2e figure has been applied to more than 120,000 products, using manufacturer's EPD data where it exists and drawing from recognised industry datasets elsewhere. This simplified the reporting process, automatically transforming complex, fragmented data into clean, auditable and report-ready Scope 3 information.

CONNECT is currently being rolled out at Travis Perkins, CCF, Keyline, BSS and Travis Perkins Managed Services.

The platform was designed and built by a team led by Phil Monkman from Travis Perkins Group company and interiors specialist, CCF.

Phil said: "Up to now, the only way to get really accurate carbon data has been for the subcontractor to download delivery tickets and invoices and manually input the information, line-by-line. For some this could mean inputting up to 3,000 data points a month, just for carbon reporting. Before CONNECT we don't believe that there was a product available to the construction industry which provided an accurate, automated and comprehensive breakdown of the embodied carbon values of individual materials, aligned to a single value. Now, both contractors and subcontractors can save hours of admin time manually inputting and verifying figures. This can be leveraged on active projects, providing clear carbon values. This is particularly important as there are risks of fines and penalties for non compliance and estimates can be some way from reality — one contractor's estimate was some 60% lower than the actual figure.

"Subcontractors don't always have quick and easy access to accurate data, which can lead to instances of "guesstimation" or use of outdated information. CONNECT solves this challenge by giving contractors something accurate, automated, delivery-level carbon data.

"CONNECT is Ideal for both upstream and downstream reporting, with every delivery captured in real time and each item matched to a precise CO2e value. This removes the need for estimates, spend-based guesstimations and manual data chasing, replacing it with an accurate, automated and transparent system. CONNECT represents a huge step change for the sector. While individual embodied carbon data has been available on a product-by-product basis for some time, the real benefit that CONNECT brings to the market is standardisation."

Travis Perkins ● www.travisperkins.co.uk

Cradle to Cradle: Troldtekt achieves Gold under stricter standard



Despite the requirements of the circular design framework Cradle to Cradle Certified® becoming more stringent, Troldtekt is delighted to announce that in July 2026, Troldtekt acoustic panels retained their Gold certification under the new standard. This marks an important milestone for both the Danish acoustic panel manufacturer and its customers.

"We have been working strategically with the Cradle to Cradle principles for 15 years and, during that time, circularity, carbon reduction and a responsible value chain have become increasingly important to our customers.

"The certification ensures that both building owners and consultants receive an independent assessment of Troldtekt's work in these areas," commented Cécile Vassort, head of product, Marketing & sustainability at Troldtekt A/S.

She adds, "Cradle to Cradle is highly valuable because the requirements are continuously strengthened, encouraging us to keep improving."

Troldtekt was previously certified under Version 3.1 of Cradle to Cradle Certified® and has now upgraded to the latest Version 5.0. The Gold certification is valid for three years and covers the majority of Troldtekt wood wool panels in natural and standard painted finishes.

Cradle to Cradle Certified® assesses products across five categories: Material Health, Product Circularity, Clean Air & Climate Protection, Water & Soil Stewardship and Social Fairness. During the re-certification process, documentation was once again updated and third-party verified across all five categories.

"For us, the strength lies in the breadth and thoroughness of the approach. Under the latest standard, the documentation requirements have increased significantly, which means we have revisited every aspect of our organisation and engaged with several suppliers. It provides a valuable exercise that aligns with our systematic and holistic approach," says Cécile Vassort.

The independent assessor, EPEA — part of Drees & Sommer, was granted access to confidential formulations from Troldtekt's suppliers in order to map the substances contained in the acoustic panels.

Amongst other things, Cradle to Cradle Certified® is about working systematically with circularity and ensuring that materials retain their value for as long as possible. Product Circularity is therefore a key focus area in Troldtekt's ongoing research and development.

"Our re-certification under Cradle to Cradle Certified® Version 5.0 confirms that we are working purposefully with the principles of the circular economy. The certification provides us with a structured framework for continuously improving our products and processes in areas such as materials, circularity and resource use" says Cécile Vassort.

Through the re-certification completed in July 2026, Troldtekt achieved Gold in all five Cradle to Cradle Certified® categories. As a result, the acoustic panels received an overall Gold certification.

Troldtekt ● www.troldtekt.co.uk



AkzoNobel strengthens customer guidance on UV curing technologies to support wood manufacturers

AKZONOBEL Wood Coatings is expanding the resources and tools available to wood product manufacturers evaluating how UV and UV LED curing technologies can improve production efficiency, reduce energy use and support more sustainable operations. The initiative coincides with the introduction of a new digital calculator to help manufacturers quantify potential cost, energy, and productivity benefits for their specific production lines.

Rolling out across Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific, the latest additions to AkzoNobel's customer support program also include educational content, expert insights and technical guidance to give furniture, cabinetry, flooring and building product manufacturers the ability to evaluate how UV curing could be applied within their existing production lines.

The initiative, which forms part of AkzoNobel Wood Coating's wider "It all adds up" sustainability program which focuses on practical and operational changes that deliver measurable environmental improvements, comes at a time when many manufacturers are facing ongoing pressure to improve efficiency and manage rising and volatile energy costs.

At the core of the initiative is a series of educational resources designed to show how UV curing technologies work, where they can be applied within different production setups, and aid early-stage evaluation.

These resources include:

- A UV curing Q&A guide, explaining key technologies, processes and terminology.
- An educational video focused on how UV curing works in practice.
- A website hub bringing together technical insights and guidance.
- Ongoing expert-led content, including talking-head videos and technical perspectives.

Alongside this educational content, AkzoNobel is providing a range of tools and technical services to help translate insight into practical implementation.

These include:

- The newly launched Cost2Coat UV calculator, used by AkzoNobel to help customers assess how efficiency and sustainability can be boosted with their unique line configuration.
- Access to AkzoNobel's Technical Application Center (TAC) across EMEA, NAM and APAC, where strategic customers projects can be tested using UV coating systems, simulate production conditions and optimize finishing processes.
- Technical service and R&D expertise to guide coating selection and successful line setup.
- Collaboration with equipment and lamp suppliers to ensure compatibility across different curing technologies.

This combination of resources, tools and technical services is designed to give manufacturers a clearer view of how UV and UV LED curing could work in practice within their own production environments.

When applied appropriately, curing technologies can deliver a range of operational benefits for wood manufacturers. UV LED systems can offer energy efficiency advantages compared with conventional curing technologies, with potential energy consumption reductions of up to 50-70% reported in some applications, depending on the line configuration and equipment used. In addition, UV coating systems can support reduced emissions and efficient material usage.

Instant curing also enables finished components to be handled or stacked immediately after application, helping to reduce drying times, minimise work-in-progress and improve overall line throughput, while maintaining high levels of finish performance, including stain and scratch resistance.

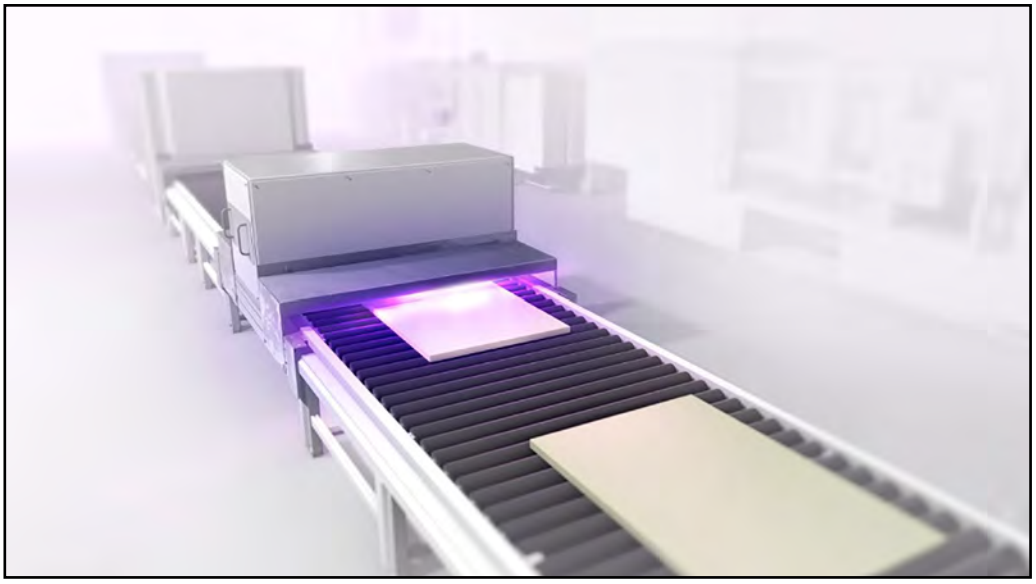
While many manufacturers are familiar with UV curing technologies and the potential benefits they can offer, understanding how these advantages translate into their own processes is often the barrier to change, says Sarah Skinner, product marketing director at AkzoNobel Wood Finishes: "UV curing technology is a proven solution but for many manufacturers the key question is how these technologies can be applied within their own production environments.

"Through the resources and tools, we will be providing practical, accessible guidance that helps more customers understand not just the benefits of UV and UV LED curing, but also what is required to implement them successfully. By combining educational resources with technical expertise and tools like the Cost2Coat calculator to support application, we can help manufacturers make informed decisions based on their specific needs."

With more than 40 years of experience in UV curing technologies, AkzoNobel continues to support customers across global markets with coating systems designed for a wide range of applications, including furniture, cabinetry, flooring and building products.

By combining education, tools and technical expertise, the company aims to help manufacturers optimize finishing processes while balancing performance, efficiency and sustainability considerations.

AkzoNobel
akzonobel-industrial-woodcoatings.com



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West Fraser champions responsible specification during FSC Forest Week



Sustainable timber products help architects, housebuilders and contractors meet performance and environmental goals

WEST FRASER supported FSC Forest Week (21-27 September) by encouraging architects, housebuilders, specifiers, and construction professionals to make responsible timber sourcing a priority throughout the built environment supply chain. As demand grows for lower-carbon construction materials and greater transparency around material provenance, West Fraser UK is highlighting the important role that Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certification plays in assuring customers that timber products originate from responsibly managed forests and controlled sources. FSC Forest Week provided an opportunity for the construction sector to recognise how responsible forest management helps protect biodiversity, supports local communities and workers, and contributes to the long-term availability of a renewable building resource.

Increasingly, timber-based panel products are being specified across housing, commercial, education and infrastructure projects as developers seek practical ways to reduce embodied carbon while maintaining performance, quality and efficiency on site.

West Fraser manufactures a range of engineered wood panel products used throughout the construction sector including timber frame, hoardings, flooring, roofing, and structural applications. The company is committed to sourcing wood fibre responsibly and offers FSC-certified products to support customers' sustainability objectives and project requirements.

David Connacher, marketing manager at West Fraser UK, explains, "FSC Forest Week is an important reminder that sustainable construction begins with responsible material choices. As architects, developers and contractors increasingly look to timber-based solutions to help reduce environmental impact, confidence in the source of those materials is more important than ever. FSC certification provides a recognised chain of custody from forest to finished product, helping construction professionals demonstrate responsible procurement while supporting well-managed forests around the world."

The importance of responsible sourcing continues to grow as environmental reporting requirements, sustainability frameworks and client expectations become increasingly stringent. For specifiers and procurement teams, certification can provide assurance that timber products contribute to broader environmental, social and governance objectives. In the housing sector, where speed, quality and sustainability are all key considerations, responsibly sourced timber panels offer a practical solution for modern methods of construction, offsite manufacturing, and energy-efficient building envelopes. For architects and designers, FSC-certified products support sustainability targets without compromising design flexibility, performance, or durability, making them suitable for a wide range of residential and commercial applications.

West Fraser UK encouraged construction professionals to use FSC Forest Week as an opportunity to review their material supply chains and consider the role that certified timber products can play in delivering more sustainable buildings. "The construction industry has a significant opportunity to drive positive environmental outcomes through its purchasing decisions," added David. "By specifying responsibly sourced timber products, the sector can help support sustainable forest management while delivering high-performing buildings for future generations."

West Fraser
Tel 01786 812921 ● Uk.westfraser.com

Milton Keynes' most sustainable office

THE RO GROUP is delighted to announce that its flagship property in Milton Keynes, Silbury House, has achieved a 5 Star NABERS UK Energy for Offices Whole Building rating, recognising the building's outstanding operational energy performance.



Silbury House is currently believed to be the only building in the UK to hold a 5 Star NABERS UK rating, and is the third highest rated Whole Building certified in the country.

NABERS UK measures the actual energy use of office buildings, rather than their predicted performance at the design stage, providing independent verification of how efficiently a building is operating in practice.

The rating represents the latest milestone in RO's extensive refurbishment of Silbury House, originally constructed in 1998. The project set out to transform the existing building into the most sustainable office building in Milton Keynes, significantly improving its energy efficiency while avoiding the embodied carbon associated with demolition and redevelopment.

The refurbishment has included the installation of 116 rooftop solar panels with a total capacity of 41 kWp, capable of generating up to 20% of the building's energy demand. The building also benefits from an energy-efficient hybrid Variable Refrigerant Flow heating and cooling system with heat recovery technology, alongside LED lighting and advanced controls designed to reduce energy consumption. These measures have already helped Silbury House achieve an EPC A+ (net zero) rating.

Silbury House's sustainability credentials extend beyond energy performance. The building has secured a 3 Star Fitwel certification for health and wellbeing, making it what is believed to be the only building in Milton Keynes to hold the accreditation. Further reinforcing its focus on building performance, it is also believed to be the only building in the region to achieve and maintain RESET Air Certification, with indoor air quality continuously monitored, and independently verified against globally recognised standards, to ensure a healthy, comfortable and productive indoor environment for occupiers.

Sustainability was also embedded in the materials and construction process. Existing materials were retained and repurposed wherever possible, including recovered raised access flooring, while carpet tiles contain 75% recycled content. No waste generated by the refurbishment was sent to landfill.



Ana Bajri, group head of sustainability at the RO Group, said: "Achieving a 5 Star NABERS UK Whole Building rating is a significant milestone for Silbury House and demonstrates what can be achieved through thoughtful investment in existing buildings.

"What is particularly important about NABERS is that it measures actual operational performance. This rating provides independent evidence that the work undertaken at Silbury House is delivering lower energy consumption and greater efficiency for our occupiers.

"We have shown that an existing building can be transformed to meet the standards expected of modern, high-quality office space. Being the only building in the UK currently holding a 5 Star NABERS UK whole building rating is a fantastic recognition. For us, this is not simply about achieving a certification; it is about using real performance data to create better buildings for occupiers and the environment."

NABERS UK was launched in 2020 and is administered by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE). Its Energy for Offices ratings assess the measured operational energy performance of existing office buildings, enabling owners and occupiers to understand, track and improve energy efficiency.

RO Group
www.rogroup.co.uk

Social value projects completed by TPMS

MORE THAN 200 community projects across the UK have been funded through £1.1 million donated through the Travis Perkins Managed Services (TPMS) social value fund since the start of the year.

TPMS provides materials and products for the repair and maintenance of the social housing sector, working directly with housing associations and local authorities.

Social value is an important part of its work, with funding ringfenced for investment in social value projects at the start of each contract. This is then used to support projects in the local area that provide meaningful improvements to the communities in which they're working.

In total, 211 projects have been funded since the start of the year for 67 customers. This has included a vast range of different projects, from running a schools insight visit in Derby, to supporting a financial literacy programme, upgrading a shopping precinct in Northampton, installing defibrillators in Southampton and supporting a series of projects with youth skills training programme delivery partner Volunteer It Yourself.



Michelle Smith (pictured), social value manager at Travis Perkins Managed Services, said: "It's absolutely crucial that in our industry we are offering really good, impactful social value within our contracts.

"Social value creates wider economic, social and environmental benefits to a community beyond the building and management of homes. It has positive impacts like improved mental health, local job creation, and enhanced financial resilience for residents.

"We take our responsibility to deliver meaningful social value really seriously, and our account managers are really involved. Our customers are putting a lot of faith in us and we want to help give back to those communities.

"Local authorities and housing associations are really stretched, which makes ensuring meaningful engagement in this area even more important, as social value funding can make a world of difference to a community that otherwise they may not see."

Projects are aligned to address some of the most pressing societal issues, including community engagement, food or fuel poverty, social progress and wellbeing, and community cohesion and placemaking.

The flexibility of the social value funding model has enabled Cottsway Housing — which has some 6,000 properties across Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire — to deliver smaller repairs for vulnerable customers free of charge. This could be relatively simple jobs such as changing a toilet seat, fitting a security chain, or installing blinds and curtain poles, but which residents would normally be expected to undertake.

Travis Perkins Managed Services
www.tpmanagedservices.co.uk/social-value/

Charity partnership recognised with an award

LEADING wall panel manufacturer Grant Westfield's charity partnership with Health All Around has been recognised at the Scottish Community Link Worker Awards where it won the award for Partnership of the Year.

Grant Westfield's collaboration with Edinburgh-based charity Health All Around began in 2025 following the formation of its Social and Charity Committee. For over 100 years, the company behind the award-winning Multipanel and Naturepanel brands has been based in the Gorgie-Dairy area of Edinburgh. Keen to give back to the local community and help those that need it most, Grant Westfield was delighted to partner with Health All Around, a local charity that provides invaluable services and resources to improve the lives of people within the Gorgie-Dairy area and beyond.

The collaboration saw Grant Westfield work with community link worker Calum Barry from Health All Around to create a flexible crisis support fund to provide timely, compassionate help to people in need.

So far, 59 individuals have benefitted from over £2,700, which has been spent on essentials such as food and clothing. Last Christmas, Grant Westfield also organised a toy drive to provide local children with presents as well as clothing donations.

To date, 26 people have used the clothing bank at Health All Around and received clothing that was donated by Grant Westfield. This includes two individuals who were referred to Health All Around by the Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey Service.

The 4th annual Scottish Community Link Worker Network Conference and Awards took place on 22nd September 2026 at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, where the award for Partnership of the Year was presented to Calum Barry, Jade Steven and Niamh Boyle from Grant Westfield. Judges praised Grant Westfield's Social and Charity Committee and its continued fundraising efforts, the ongoing collaboration between Health All Around and Grant Westfield, and the dignified way in which support has been delivered.

John Mortimer, managing director at Grant Westfield, said: "So much of the work Health All Around does happens quietly, but it makes a real difference to people's lives. Calum and the team are there for people when they need help most, and we're proud to support that work. I'm delighted to see their care and dedication recognised through this award."

On 25th September, the Scottish Parliament extended their congratulations to Health All Around's Calum Barry and Grant Westfield on their award win as it acknowledged the achievements of the charity-business partnership.

Grant Westfield ● Tel 0131 337 6262 ● www.grantwestfield.co.uk



Jade Steven (left) and Niamh Boyle (centre) with Health All Around's Calum Barry (right).

The NEON initiative in Newport



The NEON board members.

PREMIER FOREST Products CEO Terry Edgell has been appointed Chair of the New Employment Opportunities Network (NEON) Newport, a Homewards initiative that brings businesses together to help tackle homelessness by creating employment opportunities.

Homewards is the homelessness programme established by The Royal Foundation, the primary philanthropic and charitable vehicle for The Prince and Princess of Wales.

NEON brings together major employers, local businesses and public sector partners to create sustainable pathways into employment for young, vulnerable people aged 16-24 who are experiencing, or who are at risk of, homelessness.

Through access to jobs, apprenticeships, training and tailored support, the initiative helps individuals overcome barriers to work and build more secure, independent futures.

In the role, Terry has established NEON's Newport Board and is now recruiting for local employers who are committed to opening their hiring processes to young people who face barriers to employment.

The programme will also focus on ensuring those individuals remain in work, recognising that sustainable careers — not simply jobs — are the measure of success.

The appointment recognises both Terry's longstanding commitment to creating employment opportunities for people facing significant barriers to work and Premier Forest's pioneering approach to social responsibility, particularly through its Corporate Parenting Scheme which offers paid work placements for care-experienced young people, and a prisoner rehabilitation programme.

Premier Forest's involvement stems from work the company has already been delivering across its business. Its Corporate Parenting Programme and wider rehabilitation initiatives have created pathways into employment for care-experienced young people and people with convictions, all without external funding or regulatory obligation.

That work attracted the attention of Homewards, which identified Premier Forest as an example of how businesses can create lasting social impact through employment.

Terry Edgell, CEO and co-founder of Premier Forest Products, said: "I've always believed business has a responsibility to leave its communities stronger than it found them.

"At Premier Forest we've never seen social responsibility as something separate from running a successful business. We've simply tried to give people opportunities where others might see obstacles, whether that's supporting care-experienced young people, people leaving prison or those facing other barriers to employment.

"Being asked to chair NEON's Newport Board is a real honour, but it's also recognition of what Premier Forest has already achieved. We've shown that inclusive employment isn't just possible, it works.

"Now the opportunity is to encourage more employers to do the same. If businesses across Newport each created just a handful of opportunities every year, together we could transform lives, strengthen our workforce and make a meaningful contribution to preventing homelessness."

Businesses and organisations interested in supporting the initiative are encouraged to contact Terry Edgell to find out how they can get involved.

Premier Forest Products ● premierforest.co.uk

Land's End to John O'Groats for charity

A SOUTH LONDON Travis Perkins branch manager has smashed his fundraising target after completing a gruelling Land's End to John O'Groats cycle ride, which he described as the experience of his life.

Richard Galloway raised £5,091 with an impressive more than 180 donations after taking on the 1,026-mile challenge over two weeks. The 60-year-old branch manager at Travis Perkins Croydon Hampton Road said the ride had been far tougher than he expected, but that it had all been worth it to raise much-needed funds for the Alzheimer's Society, a cause close to his heart and the business' chosen charity.

Dementia is the UK's biggest killer and one in three people born today will develop the illness in their lifetime. Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading dementia charity, providing help and hope to everyone affected. Richard took on the huge physical endurance feat in memory of his father-in-law, his maternal aunt and his best friend's dad.



He said: "This was an incredible personal, memory ride for me — Alzheimer's is devastating and I've seen first-hand how it affects people.

"It's heartbreaking, and the reason I took on the challenge: I knew I wanted to do something that could make a difference. Every penny will go towards supporting Alzheimer's Society and the vital research they do.

"A massive thank you to everyone who donated to the cause — you kept me going and I couldn't have done it without you."

Richard took up cycling just seven years ago, and prior to the challenge had never spent more than two days back-to-back in the saddle. Lands End to John O'Groats saw him cycle between 60 and 80 miles a day for two full weeks!

"I definitely underestimated how hard it would be. Some days were awful: the hills, the rain, and at times I got very dehydrated and had problems with my calves.

"But it was the experience of a lifetime. We had 80 miles to ride on the last day and it was pouring, the clouds were rolling down the hills on either side of us. But as we approached the end the sun came out, and I felt like my Aunt Ann and my father-in-law Brian were shining this brilliant light on me. I was in tears, it was just incredible."

The charity ride saw Richard lose almost a stone over two weeks, burning up to 5,000 calories a day. And the 23 strangers he started out with, are now firm friends with plans to meet up for more rides.

Travis Perkins is part of Travis Perkins plc and is the UK's largest supplier of building materials to the building and construction industry.

Travis Perkins
www.travisperkins.co.uk

Charity netball tournament raises almost £5,000 for Bowel Cancer UK

COLLEAGUES and suppliers of Travis Perkins Managed Services (TPMS) took to the court to take part in a netball charity fundraiser for Bowel Cancer UK.

More than 150 colleagues, suppliers and sponsors took part in the charity tournament hosted at Benham Sports Arena in Northampton and raised almost £5,000 for the UK's leading bowel cancer charity.

Various teams across the Travis Perkins Group supported the fundraiser organised by TPMS, a leading supplier of products and materials to the social housing sector.

This is the fourth time TPMS has hosted the fundraiser, with more than 10 suppliers across the construction sector entering teams or making donations that added to the final amount raised.

Sarah Glennon from Travis Perkins Managed Services said: "We had a brilliant day hosting our annual charity netball event, and we are thrilled to have raised £4,700 for Bowel Cancer UK.

"The netball was incredibly competitive as it always is, and the winners were well deserving of their crown. Everyone played with great sportsmanship while keeping the focus on raising money for a great cause.

"Bowel cancer is a horrendous illness that impacts so many people across the UK, and the work the charity does to support those impacted by it is nothing short of brilliant.



"For TPMS, it is great to play our part in that by raising awareness and funds for those affected, and it also allows colleagues to network across the construction sector."

Teams that participated in the tournament included Procurement for Housing as well as suppliers Altro Limited and Geberit alongside a host of internal teams across the Travis Perkins Group.

"We must say a huge thank you to the support we received from our suppliers, as without their support events like this just would not be possible and to our colleagues who took time out of their busy schedules to take part."

The overall winner of the competition was the Travis Perkins Category team.

Travis Perkins Managed Services
www.tpmanagedservices.co.uk

Travis Perkins managing director welcomes plans to tackle the construction industry skill shortage

TRAVIS PERKINS managing director Richard Lavin has welcomed Government plans to introduce vocational GCSEs, highlighting the need to attract more young people into construction and create clear pathways into rewarding careers.

The Government's proposed education reforms will give young people the opportunity to study vocational subjects from the age of 14, with Building and Construction among the subjects being considered.

The new qualifications, which could be introduced in some subjects from September 2029, aim to give technical education greater recognition alongside traditional academic subjects, while providing young people with practical experience and a clearer understanding of the career opportunities available.

The announcement comes as the construction industry faces a significant skills shortage with estimates suggesting a potential shortfall of between 200,000 and 750,000 workers by 2030.



Managing director of Travis Perkins, Richard Lavin.

Richard Lavin said: "The construction industry is facing a significant skills challenge, so it's encouraging to see the Government taking steps to introduce young people to the opportunities available in our sector at an earlier age.

"Construction offers fantastic career opportunities, but as an industry we need to do more to show young people what's possible. Many of our customers have built successful businesses and rewarding careers in the trades, playing a vital role in building homes and supporting communities across the country.



"We know there's real appetite among young people to build careers in our industry. At Travis Perkins, we received over 900 applications for our Management Trainee Programme, demonstrating just how much interest there is when we create opportunities and show people what a career in construction can offer.

"Introducing vocational GCSEs from the age of 14 is a positive step, but qualifications alone won't solve the skills shortage. We need to bring learning to life by getting students onto building sites, into builders' merchants and talking directly to the tradespeople who work in the industry every day.

"As employers, merchants and tradespeople, we all have a responsibility to inspire the next generation and create clear pathways into the industry. The earlier we introduce young people to construction and the breadth of opportunities available, the stronger the pipeline of skilled people we can build for the future."

Travis Perkins
www.travisperkins.co.uk

Häfele brings KBB industry together to explore accessibility and inclusive design



HÄFELE UK and the Leicester Tigers Foundation brought together representatives from across the KBB industry on Thursday 27 August for an event exploring accessibility, inclusive design and what it means to create spaces that work for everyone.

Held at Leicester Tigers' stadium, Mattioli Woods Welford Road, the event built on Häfele's long-standing partnership with the club's Wheelchair Rugby team, which it has supported since 2018.

At the 'Maximising the Value of Space Together: Through Design and Inclusivity' event, guests heard directly from the Wheelchair Rugby team about their everyday experiences and training regime, and took part in conversations around disability, accessibility and inclusive living.

Attendees also had the opportunity to try wheelchair rugby themselves, giving them a first-hand understanding of the sport and the experiences of the team.

The event was attended by representatives from several kitchen retailers and Häfele customers, including Howdens, Magnet, and Premiere Kitchens, creating an opportunity to explore how accessibility and inclusivity can translate into kitchen design in practice.

Gemma McRae, chief sales officer for key accounts at Häfele UK, said: "One of the most valuable parts of the day was hearing directly from people about their own experiences.

"Accessibility can mean very different things to different people, so there is a lot to be gained from listening, asking questions and understanding the challenges people face in their everyday lives.

"It was also a useful opportunity to bring people from across the industry together and start a wider conversation around what good, inclusive design can look like."

Lucy Rogers, head of sales at Premiere Kitchens, one of the attendees on the day, added: "What I'll take away is the importance of looking at accessibility from the individual's point of view.



"It highlighted how much difference small design decisions can make and gave us plenty to think about in terms of the questions we ask and how we approach kitchen design."

Jamie Stead, MBE, head coach of Leicester Tigers Wheelchair Rugby Club, said: "This was the first time we've delivered this kind of event with a corporate partner, and it worked really well because people were willing to get involved and experience something outside their usual environment – and comfort zone.

"Wheelchair rugby is a powerful way to break down barriers. Giving our players the opportunity to share their own experiences also helped guests understand accessibility in a much more personal way."

Häfele
hafele.co.uk

Travis Perkins Corby relocates and launches new tool hire service

A LEADING UK builders' merchant has enhanced its offering to customers in Corby, relocating to a larger, more modern site and launching a hire service at the branch for the first time.

The relocation has created six jobs and significantly expanded the range of products and services available to tradespeople in the local area.

Its now nine-strong team operates in a 1.5-acre branch which offers greater stock availability, specialist expertise and access to a comprehensive range of hire equipment, providing a one-stop destination for trade professionals across Northamptonshire.

The relocated branch features a Travis Perkins Hire for the first time, providing customers with easy access to a vast range of professional tools and equipment hire and further expanding its national hire network of more than 270 branches.

Opening in August, the branch also boasts an array of specialised services including a brick library, a landscaping display and an estimating service as well as click and collect and next day delivery.



Billy Hadkiss, regional director at Travis Perkins, said: "Our relocation in Corby represents a significant development in the local construction community. By moving to a much larger, purpose built site, we can expand our offering. Bringing Travis Perkins Hire to Corby for the first time, alongside our existing services, means we can truly serve as a one-stop shop for our customers' every need."

The new branch will operate from 7.00 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday, and 8 am to 12 noon on Saturdays. Customers can contact the branch team directly on 01536 264001 or manage their accounts online and via the Travis Perkins app.



Stacey Ward-Murray, branch manager at Travis Perkins Corby, added: "The team has been working incredibly hard behind the scenes to prepare this fantastic new site. We are delighted to double the size of the team to nine, who can't wait to welcome everyone through the doors moving forward.

"With our expanded services and a larger stock inventory, we are in a better position than ever to provide the outstanding service and expert advice that local tradespeople rely on every day."

As part of the opening, Travis Perkins donated £1,000 to Alzheimer's Society, the business' chosen charity.

Travis Perkins is part of Travis Perkins plc and is the UK's largest supplier of building materials to the building and construction industry.

Travis Perkins
www.travisperkins.co.uk

JELD-WEN opens new 294,000 sq ft Sheffield manufacturing facility



DOORSET manufacturer JELD-WEN UK has officially opened its new 294,000 sq ft manufacturing facility at Bessemer Park in Sheffield, following a £20 million investment in its UK operations.

The purpose-built facility provides JELD-WEN with a larger, more flexible environment for manufacturing and distribution, with modern equipment and a layout designed to support efficient production, productivity and innovation.

The move builds on JELD-WEN's long-standing presence in Sheffield, with the company's existing operations relocating to the new site. The same team continues to operate from the new facility, maintaining the experience, product knowledge and customer relationships developed at its previous site.

The new facility is designed to give JELD-WEN greater operational resilience and flexibility as customer requirements evolve, while supporting the company's long-term investment in UK manufacturing.

Environmental considerations have also been incorporated into the design of the facility. The building has achieved a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating and EPC A rating, while solar PV panels are expected to generate approximately 90,084 kWh of electricity each year. An air-source heating and cooling system, rainwater harvesting and electric forklifts will also support more efficient use of energy and resources.

"The opening of our new Sheffield site at Bessemer Park is an exciting milestone for JELD-WEN and represents an important investment in the future of our UK operations," said Hamish White, director of operations, at JELD-WEN UK.

"Moving into a purpose-built facility gives our team more space, modern equipment and an environment designed around the way we operate today, while giving us greater flexibility as our customers' needs continue to evolve.

"Throughout the transition, our priority has been to maintain the quality, reliability and service our customers expect. We have the same experienced team and commitment to our customers, but now with a facility that gives us a stronger platform for the future."

The move to Bessemer Park forms part of JELD-WEN's wider investment in its UK operations. Alongside the new site, the company's Penrith facility has undergone targeted investment, including the introduction of a third line that will increase production by 50%.

Together, both sites provide a strong foundation for JELD-WEN's continued investment in UK manufacturing and its ability to respond to customer demand.

JELD-WEN
www.jeld-wen.co.uk/



Altendorf officially opens new production facility in Minden

ALTENDORF officially opened its new production facility in Minden on 4th September 2026.

In the year of its 120th anniversary, the company has also brought its manufacturing together: with the relocation of edgebanding machine production from the Hüllhorst site, all machine manufacturing now runs at a single location. Altendorf invested a single-digit million euro sum.

The ribbon was cut by Minden's Deputy Mayor Thorsten Bülte, Angelika Buttler representing District Administrator Ali Doğan, CEO Rainer Hundsdörfer and Christof Malz, head of operations.



Everything for the product in one place

In Minden, Altendorf now manufactures sliding table saws and edgebanding machines under one roof.

Procurement, development, product management, production and the entire administration are based at a single location and work in direct contact.

The result is uniform standards, more common parts, shorter throughput times and fewer missing parts. Staff can be deployed more flexibly, which reduces downtime. Minden is Altendorf's only production site in Germany; a second plant in China is closely integrated with it.

The final step of a realignment

4th September marks the end point of a path that began in January. The brand came first: since then, the entire machine portfolio has been marketed under the Altendorf name, including the edgebanding machines.

On 1st August, the company followed, merged legally and operationally into Altendorf GmbH. With the new production facility, manufacturing has now followed suit. What began as a realignment of the brand has arrived on the shop floor: in its anniversary year, Altendorf operates as one company.

What customers gain

For customers and dealers, the machine remains the machine they know.

What changes is the route to it: one point of contact for the entire portfolio, from the sliding table saw to the edgebanding machine, and one organisation in which enquiries, quotations and spare parts no longer pass between two companies.



A clear commitment to Minden

Altendorf marks its 120th anniversary this year under the motto "From Pioneer to The Craftsman's Best Friend".

The target: market and technology leadership in premium machines for the trade, and setting the standard for occupational safety on sliding table saws. For the current training year, Altendorf has again taken on apprentices in technical and commercial roles.

Rainer Hundsdörfer, CEO of Altendorf, said: "No future without origins. Only those who know where they come from can shape the future. That is exactly what we are doing here, with a clear commitment to Minden and to the people who work here. Customers have relied on their experience for 120 years."

Altendorf
www.altendorf.com

New podcast from MEDITE SMARTPLY



Episode one of the Beyond the Board podcast by SMARTPLY brings together construction and building-performance experts to explore whether the building envelope holds the key to healthier, ultra-efficient homes.

WITH HOTTER summers, high energy costs and the Future Homes Standard (FHS) on the horizon, the way homes are designed to balance energy efficiency, resilience and occupant wellbeing is coming under increasing scrutiny. In the first episode of its new *Beyond the Board* podcast series, MEDITE SMARTPLY brings together industry experts to examine one of the most fundamental elements of building design: the building envelope, and asks: "Is the secret to healthier, ultra-efficient homes hidden in the building envelope?"

The discussion comes as the construction industry prepares for the Future Homes Standard, which will come into force from 24th March 2027 for non-higher-risk-building dwellings. New homes will be required to produce at least 75% fewer carbon emissions than those built to 2013 standards, placing greater emphasis on how the building fabric performs alongside low-carbon heating and renewable energy technologies.

James Roberts MBE, architectural technologist, certified Passive House designer and technical adviser at Lowfield Timber Frames, and Simon Jones, founder and host of the Air Quality Matters podcast, agree that improving fabric performance is not simply a question of adding more insulation or making homes more airtight. Airtightness, ventilation, moisture management, material selection and build sequencing all interact to influence how a home performs and, crucially, the indoor environment experienced by its occupants.

As homes become more airtight in pursuit of better energy performance, getting that relationship right becomes increasingly important. A well-designed envelope can help reduce heat loss, manage moisture and support good indoor air quality. But focusing on individual elements in isolation can create unintended consequences elsewhere.

James explains: "The building envelope is not the entire answer, but I think it's a good foundation where everything else is built upon."

The challenge, therefore, is to consider the home as a complete system. Glazing orientation, insulation, airtightness, ventilation, moisture movement, materials and workmanship all need to work together if the finished building is to perform as intended.

This becomes particularly important when considering indoor air quality. A more airtight building requires an effective ventilation strategy, rather than relying on uncontrolled air leakage. As James explains in the episode: "If you have a good airtight building, you will need some mechanical ventilation to make sure that those rooms are comfortable and the air quality is good."

The distinction between airtightness and ventilation is therefore critical. A draughty building is not necessarily a well-ventilated building, while an airtight home does not mean preventing fresh air from entering. Instead, the aim is to control how and where air moves through the building.

Moisture management is another fundamental part of the equation. Poor detailing that allows water or moisture into the building fabric can undermine other aspects of envelope performance, reinforcing the need to consider durability, airtightness, vapour control and insulation as interconnected parts of the same system.

The implications extend beyond energy performance. Simon highlights just how much of our lives are spent within the built environment: "If you live to 80 years of age, you'll spend 70 years of your life indoors… You'll spend 55 years of that in your own home. Twenty-five years of those 80 years will be in your bedroom, asleep."

This makes the quality of the indoor environment, and the building envelope separating it from the outside world, an important consideration for long-term health and wellbeing.

The conversation also examines one of the construction industry's persistent challenges: the gap between designed performance and actual performance once a building is completed. With greater focus on real-world building performance, James argues that measurement will become increasingly important.

James says: "Actually measuring what's being delivered is going to be huge, especially for the bigger housebuilders. They need to be able to deliver to that standard and be tested on it in years to come, so we know the building is performing as they said it would. The performance gap is real, and that is something the whole construction industry in the UK is going to have to come to terms with."

Looking further ahead, data-driven analytics and sensors could transform how homes are monitored throughout their lifetimes, measuring factors such as energy performance, humidity and indoor environmental quality. Simon compares this evolution to the automotive industry, where modern cars use sensors to monitor performance, identify problems and provide manufacturers with continuous feedback to improve future products.

Simon explains: "The value of data from the built environment is very analogous to the automotive industry. The vast majority of vehicles are now collecting data from thousands of sensors. That data helps manufacturers refine and improve their products. That's where buildings are heading."

Signed, Sealed, Developed: Engineering the Building Envelope for Healthy Homes is the first episode of *Beyond the Board*, a new podcast-style video series powered by SMARTPLY. Hosted by Roly Ward, head of business development, and David Murray, head of technical affairs & Ireland sales, MEDITE SMARTPLY, the series will bring together technical specialists and professionals from across construction to explore the practical challenges shaping the future of the industry, from building performance and healthy homes to the skills gap.

Full episodes will be available via YouTube and Spotify.

***Beyond the Board* from MEDITE SMARTPLY**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=adXZuLl4dBs
open.spotify.com/episode/7vgJDSsIVvwRDQDtRUEnfM?si=7ebSEONiSbeBfhOLuevufg

EGGER delivers quality and speed of build for Dandara, on beautiful new Buckmore Green

BUCKMORE GREEN is the latest development from award winning housebuilder Dandara, on the edge of the beautiful South Downs and built with a strong emphasis on landscape. Continuing its relationship with structural flooring manufacturer EGGER, Dandara has specified EGGER Protect flooring boards on the development, chosen for durability and its contribution to streamlined build schedules.



Delivered by Dandara, Buckmore Green is an exclusive new housing development located in the market town of Petersfield, on the edge of the South Downs National Park. Comprising a beautiful collection of 85 units, ranging from two-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom homes, the properties are designed to complement their surroundings, with materials, designs and architectural features reflective of the local character.

Speaking about the development, Luke McCarthy, site manager at Dandara, said: "Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do; we're building homes for the future and for the community. Our houses have a variety of sustainable features, including air source heat pumps, solar panels, EV chargers and enhanced insulation, all compliant with Part L of the Building Regulations."

At the core of any house build are structural flooring boards, heavy-duty and load-wearing panels that are installed directly onto floor joists to form the main subfloor.

Luke continued: "As a site manager, my priority for any flooring product or system is always for it to be durable and easy to handle for my teams on site, as well as positively contributing to quality and speed of build. It's for all these reasons and more that we work closely with EGGER UK."

EGGER and Dandara have been working collaboratively for a number of years, with a specification agreement in place for EGGER's Peel Clean Xtra and Protect structural flooring systems.

"All products are designed with the build team in mind," explained Luke. "They're lightweight for the trades to carry, provide protection against the working environment and are durable; they can be installed in all sorts of conditions, enabling us to continue the build effectively. For us, working in construction in England at different times of year, you can be faced with all manner of weather conditions. The 100-day exposure rating offered by EGGER Protect provides the freedom to be a bit vulnerable at times, giving you added time to continue with the build, without worrying about weather damage or delays."

Trusted by housebuilders nationwide, EGGER offers a wide range of structural flooring boards, with each product undergoing rigorous testing to ensure they meet the highest industry standards. EGGER Protect can be left exposed to the elements for up to 100 days and has been classified with a 'Low Slip Potential' by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). When installed with EGGER Joint & Joist Adhesive, all products benefit from EGGER's Advanced Lifetime Guarantee.

Mike Tozer, national housebuilding account manager at EGGER, added: "We've been in partnership with Dandara now for a number of years, working collaboratively and discussing their sustainability requirements. We're really pleased to support Dandara with our portfolio of structural flooring systems, as they continue to grow and expand at brilliant developments, such as Buckmore Green."

Zoey Rampton, head of sales at Dandara Southern concluded: "Buckmore Green is a really exciting launch for us because it captures what makes Petersfield such a special place to live. It's rare to find a site where you can walk into town one way and be out on country paths the other, and that balance has shaped every decision we've made.

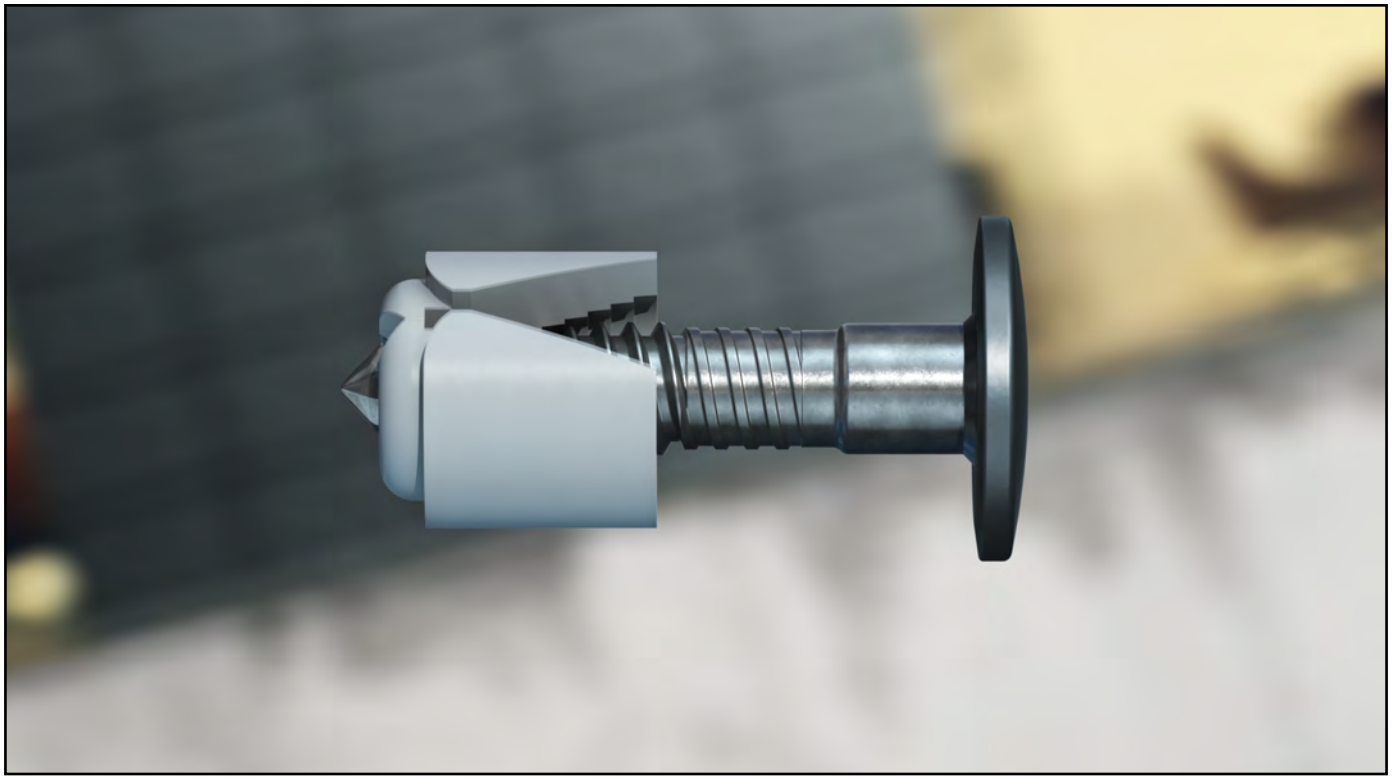


"We've taken a thoughtful approach to how the homes sit within the landscape, creating a neighbourhood that feels settled and connected rather than over-engineered. This is about building homes that work for real life, in a place where people can put down roots, feel part of the town and enjoy the outdoors on their doorstep."

Based in the South of England, Dandara has been creating and building award-winning homes for over 30 years, recently achieving 5* customer satisfaction from the Home Builders Federation survey for the sixth consecutive year.

EGGER ● www.egger.com/en/building/

Centre Point system from SFS



WITH UP to a dozen rivets required per square metre to retain many types of rainscreen cladding panel, plus the array of equipment needed to complete the task, specialist installers are at risk of making critical errors as well as suffering fatigue or even injury. It is a situation that was crying out for the simple yet ingenious product solution that is already proving itself to be both user-friendly and reliable.

As lead product manager, Francesca Healy comments: "There was a clear opportunity to innovate in this area and improve outcomes for installers, main contractors and, in turn, clients. To make the visible fixing of rainscreen cladding panels quicker, easier and safer, SFS has developed the Centre Point system: a self-drilling, threaded fastener with a centring sleeve. The whole process is quicker to carry out, involves fewer tools and operations; and ultimately provides a more consistent install."

Put simply, the challenge of meeting a panel manufacturer's requirements can mean the difference between having a façade system that performs safely for the life of the building, or one at increased risk of panel deformation or detachment, potentially putting the public at risk as well as leaving the building fabric exposed.

To fully appreciate why Centre Point is proving so effective in both retrofit and new-build situations across the sectors, it is instructive to reconsider the inherent problems presented by using traditional visible fixing products.

Panels are supplied with both fixed position holes (generally at the centre) and those to allow sliding — or gliding — uptake of thermal expansion: which require very precise positioning. Failing to meet the necessary tolerances can lead to stresses and actual failures, through deformation and detachment.

In practice, typical rivet based visible fixings require the installer to pre-drill a plus-1 mm sized hole in the aluminium profile, the hole must be positioned exactly in the centre of the sliding slot. Therefore, as well as the drill and rivet gun, the operative must carry additional tooling, including a nose tool for alignment, to avoid over-tightening the panel against the substrate and a stand-off nose piece is needed to maintain a small gap.

Such complications not only impact productivity, but can also increase the potential for installation errors, which can seriously detract from the performance of the installed system.

Underlined by the implementation of the Building Safety Act, specifiers and installers must ensure both integrity of the installation (against any thermal stresses). All involved should further strive for durability to avoid the need to return to site, with the risks of more working at height plus the costly provision of additional scaffolding or other access equipment.

In contrast to traditional practices, the SFS Centre Point solution requires a straightforward screw gun to complete a single operation install that is faster and simpler whereby the fastener is inserted into the sliding hole and screwed straight in.

Firstly, even if the installer is working at an awkward height, the design of the fastener's bio-polymer sleeve perfectly aligns with the middle of the slot before breaking and ejecting away as pressure is applied; meaning no debris remains in the hole. As no residue is left in the hole it means the fastener allows for the full movement of the panel. Then not only is the stainless steel fastener's optimised tip able to efficiently penetrate into aluminium substrates, there is also a 'bi-met' version of Centre Point available for installation into steel substrates. In both cases the specially engineered double thread performs two functions.

Initially it prevents the fastener from kicking sideways, keeping it perpendicular to the face of the panel. Secondly, the double thread guards against the fastener unwinding once installed. There is also a reduced threaded zone, which mitigates the risk of damage from over-driving and prevents the panel being clamped and thus immovable against the rail. Aesthetically, the Dome screw head of the Centre Point can also be painted to colour match the panel.

Finally, the operation is facilitated through the SFS optimised T25W drive bit which provides a secure engagement for optimal guidance.

Francesca concludes: "The Centre Point solution ensures that the panel OEM's requirements are fulfilled, while main contractors have the reassurance that their projects are protected against poor panel installation and that project dates are more likely to be met. In the long term, façades are protected against panels failing as a result of being unable to accommodate thermal movement."

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Paul Hodgkiss Designs celebrates 40 years

A FAMILY-RUN kitchen, furniture and interiors studio behind some of Scotland's most iconic wood-based designs is celebrating four decades of craftsmanship and design as the business sets it sights on further long-term growth.



Paul Hodgkiss Designs was launched in 1986 and has evolved over four decades into a business recognised for its distinctive approach to design, craftsmanship and a focus on sustainability, quality and longevity.

Paul founded the business from a small workshop in Glasgow's Southside — the base where he remains, alongside a team of 10 people. What started as a passion project has slowly evolved into an iconic brand known for sourcing sustainable wood of the highest quality from Scotland, with unmistakable, unique design language that has shaped the look and feel of some of the country's most remarkable homes, bars and venues. Over the last four decades, the company has been commissioned to work on bespoke projects for Scottish bars and hotels, including Edinburgh's W Hotel, Bowmore Hotel, Monkey Bar, Bouzy Rouge, Café Antipasti, Bar Bola, Meat Bar and Palomino.

The reputation for distinctive, solid-wood craftsmanship and design has also carried the business into Scotland's drinks industry, with commissions for distillers including Isle of Arran Distillers, Glenfiddich and Loch Lomond's Luss Distillery and Ben Lomond Gin, alongside bespoke kitchens, staircases and architectural joinery for homes and businesses across the country and overseas.

One of the defining moments in the company's story came in 2014, when Paul Hodgkiss and his team were chosen to design and hand-craft the 96 wooden medal podium sets for the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, along with the medal trays and 1,500 wooden quaichs presented to winning athletes. The commission put a Southside workshop's craftsmanship in front of a worldwide television audience and cemented Paul Hodgkiss Designs' status as a genuinely national name.

A more recent milestone came with the completion of the new Luss Distillery in 2025. Paul Hodgkiss Designs was commissioned to act as lead designer focused on a brief of 'Scottish Contemporary', ensuring the concepts maintained their original purity throughout the significant building project. The team designed the interiors and exteriors of the main distillery and discovery buildings, working collaboratively with award-winning experiential marketing agency Hot Pickle to maintain a consistent design language and managing a complex team of builders, architects and tradespeople. The team experimented with techniques and materials using ancient structural materials and finishing methods with local timbers while creating innovative modern designs, including placing the gin's brand into the structural designs, resulting in supporting timber frames with frameless glass walls and the now iconic Beacon windows. Within a few months of opening, the distillery was awarded a five-star quality grading by the Association of Visitor Attractions.



Paul Hodgkiss said: "The last four decades have been an exciting and amazing journey. I've always loved the challenge of design, working with wood and other natural materials. Forty years on, I've witnessed some highs and lows, but thankfully mostly highs and I'm particularly proud that, in that time, we've welcomed 26 apprentices who have become the next generation of experts in wood design. To think I'd still be here, surrounded by a team of specialists blows me away. I'm incredibly proud to have remained loyal to the Southside of Glasgow and that's rewarded me with such a talented team and loyal customers across the country that genuinely appreciate real craftsmanship, rather than the throw-away culture that is so present today.

"The bespoke projects have tested my skills and have evolved real blood, sweat and tears, but I think I take the greatest pride in knowing that our kitchen and other interior wood-based designs have transformed the homes of our clients. There's something quite humbling in knowing that you've played a small part in turning a house into a family home that will last for generations."

Paul Hodgkiss Designs
paulhodgkissdesigns.co.uk/

Keeping things straight — Maun's precision steel straight edges deliver accuracy that lasts

WHEN precision matters, even the simplest tools can make a significant difference. Whether marking out materials, cutting wallpaper, fitting floor coverings or checking the accuracy of a finished surface, a straight edge needs to do more than simply look straight. Maun Industries' Steel Straight Edges are precision engineered to provide an accurate, reliable reference for checking, marking, scoring and cutting, time after time.

Expertly manufactured in England, Maun's Steel Straight Edges combine high-quality carbon steel construction with a precision finished bevelled edge, delivering accuracy of 0.001 inch per foot, or less than 0.1 mm per metre. Designed for professionals and serious DIY users alike, they provide a dependable reference edge wherever straight lines or accurate surfaces are essential.



Precision in every line

A straight edge may be a simple tool, but accuracy is critical when the quality of the finished result depends on a perfectly straight line or a surface being true. Maun's Steel Straight Edges are surface ground to provide a smooth, comfortable finish, while the bevelled working edge allows users to see the marking line clearly and accurately.

That precision also makes the straight edge useful as an inspection tool. Placed against a surface, the bevelled edge can be used to identify uneven areas, such as bows, dips or high spots. With a light source positioned behind the straight edge, any light visible between the edge and the surface can indicate a gap and therefore an area that is not flat.

This simple method can be particularly useful when checking the accuracy of machined, fabricated or finished surfaces. Depending on the application, the straight edge can be checked in different directions across the surface to identify variations that might otherwise be difficult to see.

The 3.25 mm thick carbon steel construction provides a substantial, stable edge that stays firmly in place during marking and scoring. Its thickness also makes the straight edge suitable for use with a metal scriber, providing a robust guide for more demanding applications.

For added durability, every straight edge is case hardened to HRC 57. This helps ensure the precision edge can withstand repeated use while maintaining its performance over the long term.

One tool, countless applications

Designed for tasks involving checking, marking, working and cutting in straight lines, Maun's Steel Straight Edges are suitable for a wide range of professional and domestic applications.

For engineers, machinists, fabricators and quality inspectors, a straight edge can provide a quick and practical way to check the flatness or straightness of a surface. It can be used during manufacture or fabrication, before components are assembled, or as part of a final inspection to identify unwanted gaps or surface irregularities.

For flooring professionals, the straight edges provide a reliable guide when cutting and laying vinyl flooring, while also allowing the installer to check the condition of a surface before work begins. In decorating, they can be used when measuring, cutting and hanging wallpaper, helping users achieve clean, accurate results.

The tools are equally suited to woodworking, textiles, leathercraft and other handicraft applications where accurate marking and cutting are essential. For woodworkers in particular, a straight edge can be useful for checking the straightness of timber and other work surfaces as well as guiding a cut or marking a line.

Available in a wide selection of metric and Imperial lengths, users can choose a straight edge suited to the scale of the task, from compact options for smaller craft and workshop jobs through to longer tools for flooring, decorating and larger workpieces.

Built for professional performance

Unlike lightweight plastic rulers, a steel straight edge provides the rigidity and stability needed to stay securely positioned when marking or cutting. This makes it particularly useful when working with materials that do not naturally lie completely flat.

The rigidity and precision of the tool are equally important when it is being used as a reference for checking a surface. A straight edge is only as useful as the accuracy of its working edge, which is why precision manufacture and surface finishing are so important in professional applications.

A built-in 6 mm hanging hole provides a simple storage solution when the tool is not in use, while each straight edge is supplied with anti-rust paper to help protect the surface during storage.

The combination of precision manufacturing, durable carbon steel construction and practical design reflects Maun's approach to specialist tools: take a familiar tool and engineer it to perform better.

Timothy Scholes, managing director at Maun Industries, said, "A straight edge is one of those tools that can easily be taken for granted, but when accuracy matters, the quality of the edge really does make a difference.

"Our Steel Straight Edges are designed to give users confidence that the line they mark or cut against is genuinely straight, but they can also be used as a simple and effective way of checking the accuracy of a surface. By combining precision grinding with hardened carbon steel construction, we've created a straightforward tool that delivers professional performance across a wide range of applications.'"

With more than 80 years of manufacturing expertise, Maun Industries continues to design and manufacture specialist tools in England that combine practical functionality with precision engineering. Its Steel Straight Edges demonstrate that even the simplest workshop tools can benefit from careful design, quality materials and attention to detail.

For professionals and serious DIY users looking for a straight edge that they can rely on, Maun's precision steel range provides accuracy, durability and dependable performance — whether checking a surface, marking a line or guiding a cut.

Maun Industries
Tel 01623 554599
www.maunindustries.com

MKM urges businesses to install defibrillators after multiple emergency incidents



MKM Building Supplies is encouraging builders' merchants and businesses across the construction industry to install defibrillators, after the equipment has been used to help people during medical emergencies at several of its branches.

To mark Restart a Heart Day on 16 October, MKM is sharing its experiences to highlight the importance of having defibrillators close by, and to reassure people that they don't need medical training to use one.

MKM began installing automated external defibrillators (AEDs) across its branches in 2020. Today, every branch has one, with all devices registered on The Circuit, the UK's national defibrillator network, which helps ambulance services locate them in an emergency.

While MKM hoped the equipment would never be needed, its teams have now had to use the devices on several occasions, stepping in to help customers during medical emergencies.

Simon Raywood, head of health and safety at MKM Building Supplies and chair of the Builders Merchants Federation's (BMF) health and safety working Group, said: "When we first started installing defibrillators across our branches, we hoped we'd never have to use them. Unfortunately, there have now been several occasions when they've been needed, and that's really brought home just how important it is to have one available.

"These are frightening situations for everyone involved. Nobody expects to come into work and find themselves dealing with a medical emergency, but that's exactly what some of our colleagues have faced.

"What has really stayed with us is the gratitude of the families. Every time, they've been incredibly thankful to the teams who stepped forward to help. It shows what a difference having a defibrillator, and people willing to use it, can make."

The branch teams have access to defibrillator training, giving them the confidence to step in if it's ever needed.

Simon continued: "I think a lot of people assume you need specialist training to use a defibrillator. We offer training across MKM, and we'd always encourage people to take it up, but the devices themselves are very straightforward.

"Branch team members who've had to use them in real emergencies have told us how easy the instructions were to follow, even in what was obviously a very frightening situation.

"It's understandable to worry about doing something wrong when someone's life could be at stake. But the defibrillator talks you through what to do, step by step, and won't deliver a shock unless it's needed.

"We want people to know that, because we'd hate for someone to hesitate when they could be helping to save a life."

According to the British Heart Foundation, there are more than 40,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests in the UK each year, with fewer than one in ten people surviving.

For every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation, the chances of survival can decrease by up to 10%.

Despite the potential to save lives, many defibrillators aren't used in emergencies because people don't know where to find them or ambulance services aren't aware of their location.

By registering its devices on The Circuit, MKM makes sure ambulance services can see where they are and direct callers to them when needed.

For Simon, it's something he'd like to see more businesses across the industry prioritise.

"Builders' merchants are busy places. Every day, we've got branch teams, customers, tradespeople, delivery drivers and members of the public coming through our doors. A cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anywhere, and the emergency services can't always get there in those first few minutes.

"We've made sure there's a defibrillator in every MKM branch because we believe it's the right thing to do. Having seen them used in real emergencies, we're even more convinced of that.

"I'd encourage every merchant, whatever their size, to seriously consider installing one. Make sure people know where it is, register it with The Circuit and give colleagues the chance to learn how it works.

"And most importantly, don't be afraid to use it. You hope you'll never need to, but if you do, having a defibrillator close by could make all the difference."

Restart a Heart Day takes place annually on 16 October and is led by Resuscitation Council UK. The initiative raises awareness of cardiac arrest and encourages more people to learn CPR and how to use a defibrillator.

By sharing its experiences, MKM hopes more businesses will consider installing defibrillators and help give people the confidence to act when they're needed.

MKM Building Supplies
https://mkm.com

"Let there be light" with Makita's new portable tower light



THE NEW portable ML014G Tower Light from Makita provides bright task lighting on construction sites where there is no power source. Compatible with both 18V LXT and 40V XGT batteries, and providing a maximum luminous flux of 15,000 lumens, the Makita Tower Light is easy to carry and set up. Furthermore, the cordless, battery operated site light offers true flexibility; trade professionals can adjust both the height and light angle extensively, to suit the application and provide optimal illumination.

The ML014G Tower Light features an integrated tripod, offering simple and stable set up via a slide handle. Highly adaptable, users can manually adjust its height ranging from 1,085 mm to 2,430 mm. Crucially, the light angle can be adapted too. Designed to be as flexible as possible, its light base is combined with three separate light heads that can individually rotate 180 degrees vertically and horizontally.

Kevin Brannigan, marketing manager at Makita concluded: "With excellent portability, the new ML014G Tower Light addresses all of the key challenges when it comes to providing illumination on construction sites. Even with no mains power source available, users can get themselves set up and ready to work quickly and easily, benefitting from a wide, bright, adjustable light of 5,000 Kelvin."

Finally, when used in combination with the powerful and reliable Makita BL4080F and BL18120 Li-Ion batteries, the new ML014G Tower Light can achieve an impressive run time of 48 hours at its minimum light level and 3.6 hours at its maximum.

Makita ● www.makitauk.com

Surface Design Show partners with RIBA

FOLLOWING ON from the success of last year, The Surface Design Show (SDS) is delighted to announce the continuation of its partnership with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) for the 2027 edition of the show. Building on the resounding success of last year's collaboration, this renewed alliance reaffirms the show's status as an unmissable fixture in the architecture and design industry's annual calendar.

SDS will take over London's Business Design Centre from 2nd-4th February 2027, promising to be a key event for architects and designers in London and beyond. Last year's partnership saw RIBA bring its AI in Practice Summit to Surface Design Show, welcoming more than 300 architects to explore the rapidly evolving role of AI in architecture. The summit complemented the exhibition programme, creating networking opportunities and exposing attendees to the best in materials, finishes and surfaces. For 2027, RIBA will once again bring its AI in Practice Summit to SDS.

This year's attendees can look forward to: an exciting programme of activity, including discussion on the latest thinking on AI and its impact on architecture; a programme of talks, discussions and network with peers to share examples of challenges and success stories in the implementation of AI ; and discussions on the emerging AI tools, technologies and applications.

"We are delighted to partner with RIBA again for this year's Surface Design Show. This growing relationship reflects our commitment to delivering the best possible experience for exhibitors and attendees to the show. We look forward to seeing where it takes us next," says David Todd, event director at Surface Design Show.

Surface Design Show ● www.surfacedesignshow.com



Ecological Building Systems: supporting retrofit projects at BE-ST



ECOLOGICAL Building Systems, a leading supplier of sustainable building materials, demonstrated its systems and latest innovations for renovating buildings at the BE-ST Fest International Retrofit Conference at the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh on 2nd September 2026.

The Ecological Building Systems technical team exhibited Retro EcoWall®, an internal wall insulation system designed for traditional masonry buildings, alongside the new System Calculator, an exclusive online tool available through the company's website.

The System Calculator simplifies the estimation process by guiding users through a series of questions to automatically generate a tailored list of materials appropriate for the submitted requirements. The tool enables users to compare the impact of different options on material quantities, costs and U-values, helping to streamline early-stage project planning and support informed decision-making from the start.

The tool can be used with Retro EcoWall® and several other systems. Retro EcoWall® is a system that incorporates Diasen Diathonite Thermactive cork and lime thermal plaster, Gutex Thermoroom wood fibre insulation boards, a smooth, lime, finishing plaster and breathable natural paint finishes.

This combination not only provides insulation but is also airtight, breathable and effectively manages moisture in the wall to prevent issues such as condensation and mould.

By adjusting the thickness of the materials, Retro EcoWall® can be configured to reach the appropriate U-value. Ecological Building Systems' dedicated technical team can also be contacted to provide additional guidance and support, helping architects, specifiers and contractors achieve the best possible moisture safe outcomes.

Ecological Building Systems' technical team were available during the event to explain how the System Calculator can be used to build up the Retro EcoWall® system to gain a clear indication of U values, material requirements and indicative pricing.

Ed Anthony, Ecological Building Systems' technical specifications advisor based in Scotland, says: "We are delighted to be showcasing both our Retro EcoWall® system and our new System Calculator at the International Retrofit Conference. Retro EcoWall® is a simple and effective solution for retrofitting existing properties, helping to bring them up to modern thermal performance standards using natural, breathable materials with moisture balance and compatibility at its core.

"The System Calculator is a valuable tool for architects, contractors, and homeowners, enabling them to calculate material quantities and U-values, as well as generate project quotations quickly and accurately. Customer feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many users highlighting how the tool supports more informed decision making from the earliest stages of a project."

Visitors were encouraged to bring project plans and ask technical questions as Ecological Building Systems' technical specialists were available throughout the event to discuss project-specific challenges, detailing and building performance requirements.

Now in its fourth year, the International Retrofit Conference, organised by Built Environment — Smarter Transformation (BE-ST), brings together industry leaders and innovators to tackle the challenge of retrofitting existing buildings. The conference focuses on reducing energy demand, improving energy efficiency and creating more comfortable, sustainable living environments.

To support these aims, the event provides architects, engineers, designers, contractors, housebuilders and suppliers with the opportunity to share knowledge, discuss industry challenges and explore practical solutions for delivering high-performance, low-carbon retrofit projects at scale.

Ecological Building Systems
www.ecologicalbuildingsystems.com/solutions/heat-and-cold-protection/retro-ecowall

Mirka brings power, precision and dust-free performance to The Tool Show



MIRKA UK brought its latest generation of professional tools to The Tool Show at Kempton Park, where visitors could get hands-on with the latest innovations on stand G13.

The line-up included the Mirka® POLAROS® RP 600, DEROS RS600 and the latest addition to the extractor range, the Mirka® DEXOS 1217 M-Class AFC. These tools are engineered from the ground up for demanding professional applications, and their combination of power, precision and versatility helps users achieve a consistently high-quality finish while creating a cleaner, more dust-controlled working environment.

The Mirka® POLAROS® RP 600 rotary polisher combines a compact, balanced design with precise control, particularly for detailed and vertical work. Efficient cooling protects internal components during extended use, while a low noise output of 58 decibels supports a quieter working environment.

Its Ramp Up function gradually increases speed as pressure is applied to reduce compound splatter, while Ramp Down lowers the rpm if excessive pressure is detected, helping to protect both the tool and the surface.

Also on display was the Mirka® DEROS RS 600. It has been designed by Mirka's R&D team to deliver the power and performance needed for demanding, heavy-duty applications. In addition, the ergonomic, low-maintenance design supports comfortable use over extended periods. When paired with a Mirka dust extractor and dust-free abrasives, the tool helps create a cleaner, safer working environment.

To complement the tools on display and showcase the evolution of Mirka's extractor range, the Mirka® DEXOS 1217 M Class AFC is powered by a 1200 W brushless electric motor to ensure dust is quickly and efficiently removed from surfaces. It is also versatile, as the R&D team in Jeppo, Finland, developed it to handle both wet and dry applications. In addition, it is compatible with multiple tool types, helping to reduce downtime as tools do not need to be switched from job to job.

Speaking before the show, Neil Newbrook, business sector manager, Wood, Mirka UK, says: "Our experienced technical team will be on hand to demonstrate a selection of our ever-growing product portfolio at The Tool Show to an engaged audience. We believe that the control, performance and consistency of the tools will help increase the efficiency and productivity of the production process, and we are confident users will quickly reap the benefits."

Mirka UK
www.mirka.com/en-gb/



Simply Titus: simple where it matters

IN CABINET manufacturing, small details can make a significant difference to production and assembly. At SICAM 2026, Titus demonstrated how its precision engineered components help manufacturers simplify installation, improve assembly efficiency and deliver reliable functionality.

Presented under Simply Titus, the exhibition highlighted solutions developed around practical challenges — from fitting hinges and connecting cabinet panels to adjusting drawers and controlling movement. At the centre of this approach is Titus' Consumer Assembly Friendliness (CAF) philosophy, which focuses on intuitive assembly, fewer steps and reduced opportunities for error.



Simplifying Hinge Installation and Handleless Opening

The T-type PressTo hinge combines tool-free hinge cup fixing with Titus 3Way snap-on mounting, helping reduce installation steps while ensuring secure attachment. Its design accommodates common drilling and alignment variations, supporting reliable cabinet assembly. The T-type range also includes T-type Noir, with a dark finish suited to contemporary cabinet designs.

For handleless cabinets, Push Latch S3 provides smooth, silent and bounce-free door opening. Its +3.5 mm door-gap adjustment supports precise alignment, while the integrated SafeGuard feature prevents unintended removal of the adjustment button.

Making Cabinet Connections Easier

Quickfit TL5 Full Metal Jacket combines tool-free insertion into standard 5 mm drill holes with an expanding steel sleeve for strong, reliable joints in chipboard, MDF and solid wood. Its tolerance to drilling variation supports consistent assembly, while factory pre-insertion using Titus FastFit equipment can reduce the number of steps required during final cabinet assembly.

For wardrobes, cupboards and large modular cabinet systems, System 6.2 offers accurate knock-in insertion and secure connections. Its Angledriv design enables tightening at angles of up to 27°, making assembly more accessible where working space is limited.

Precise Drawer Adjustment and Controlled Movement

The Tekform Slimline+ drawer system features colour-coded 3D front adjustment, accessible from the front of the drawer for intuitive and accurate alignment. Its compatibility with the Tacto push-to-open system supports handleless applications, while integrated damping provides controlled movement in everyday use.

Damping Engineered Around the Application

Titus' proprietary damping technology is developed to provide controlled movement across different operating conditions and applications. Its Adaptive Response Technology (ART) adjusts damping response to movement characteristics, supporting smooth, consistent closing. Beyond cabinet hardware, Titus applies its damping expertise to sliding doors, architectural systems and household appliances. The Slidix range offers soft-closing solutions for sliding and pocket doors, with damping configurations adapted to different door weights and installation requirements.



Experiencing Simply Titus at SICAM

From assembly-friendly connectors to controlled movement, Titus solutions share a common purpose: reducing unnecessary complexity while maintaining reliable performance. Visitors were able to explore these technologies at SICAM 2026, Hall 2, Stand B44/C45, from 20 to 23 October in Pordenone, Italy.

Titus Group
uk.titusplus.com

Wood Awards 2026 shortlist announced

THE WOOD AWARDS has announced the 34-strong shortlist for 2026, showcasing the UK's most ambitious and innovative work in wood across architecture, furniture and product design.



Selected from more than 200 entries, the shortlist comprises 20 buildings and 14 furniture and object projects.

Together, they demonstrate the creativity, environmental responsibility and technical ingenuity of designers and fabricators working with wood today.

The shortlisted projects span the UK, from London and the South East to Yorkshire, the Midlands, Wales and Scotland, reflecting the range of work being undertaken with wood across the country.

Among the 20 shortlisted building projects, six are London based, including a landmark CLT and steel commercial scheme; a six-storey glulam extension to the Old Vic theatre; a timber-hemp addition to a home in Hackney; a series of pavilions for a sustainability centre; a helical timber staircase; and a research showcase of prototype structures and products using a variety of English grown species.

Three university projects have also been shortlisted: a timber and straw kit-of-parts pavilion for Manchester Metropolitan University's Fashion Institute; a glulam-roofed extension for the Liverpool School of Architecture; and a vast new, publicly accessible cultural hub for Oxford University. Elsewhere in Oxford, a circular cycle pavilion brings timber into the public realm, while in Sussex, the Camber Sands Welcome Centre creates a welcoming gateway to one of the UK's busiest beaches.

Yorkshire-based projects include the Heritage Quad, a new setting for heritage crafts within the precinct surrounding the Grade I-listed cathedral in York, and Tesco's first fully timber low-carbon superstore, in Harrogate.

Two projects demonstrate the potential of timber-led retrofit to transform existing agricultural buildings. At Home Farm Evenlode, two barns have been converted into a new headquarters for a finance company, while another has been adapted to create a public exhibition and workshop space for the Henry Moore Foundation.

In Cardiff and Winchester are two very different examples of timber design within educational settings. A traditionally joined solid timber pavilion for a Welsh primary school offers a calm sanctuary for children's wellbeing, while a new swimming pool roof for Winchester College pushes the structural capabilities of CLT.

Completing the Building shortlist are three residential projects: a Wiltshire home built from Douglas fir, oak and rammed earth; a sculptural ceiling installation of ash 'pebbles'; and an oak and clay-brick extension to a hillside house in Surrey.

The 14 shortlisted Furniture & Object projects also demonstrate the diverse applications of different timber species and products in contemporary design and making.

Three items have been shortlisted in the Bespoke category: a carved ash mantelpiece; a prototype table made from green oak branches; and a cabinet and wall mirror inspired by forms found in roots and branches.

Four Production furniture pieces include a collection of five-legged ash stools; a mirror crafted from hazel stems; a pine resin table lamp; and a furniture family made from No. 1 grade cherry wood.

The three Sculpted Objects include a circular sycamore table designed to house 200 amulets; an artistic intervention into three sections of wind-blown Scots pine; and a composition of bog oak veneer, carbon-dated to 2500 BC.

The four Student projects feature a lightweight bench utilising industry oak offcuts; a shelf that reinterprets the butterfly joint at an architectural scale; an iconographic folding screen; and a collection of ultra-low-carbon chestnut and oak stools.

Each shortlisted project will be reviewed in person by the Wood Awards judging panels, making the awards a uniquely rigorous competition.

The Wood Awards buildings jury is led by architect Jim Greaves, and includes fellow architects Kirsten Haggart, Jonas Lencer, Sasha Bhavan and David Morley, structural engineers Andrew Lawrence, Nathan Wheatley and Andrew Trotman, architectural journalist Ruth Slavid and sustainability expert Neil Smith.

Jim Greaves, head of the Buildings judging panel, says: "The quality and diversity of this year's entries made for a rewarding and rigorous selection process. From a strong field of projects, we have selected 20 building schemes, with each demonstrating a considered use of wood, alongside a high level of design ambition and technical skill.

"This year we have again been impressed by the inventive ways project teams are working with timber in response to the increasingly complex demands of contemporary construction."

"Together, these projects represent some of the most accomplished examples of timber design and construction in the UK today, and I look forward to seeing them in person as the final judging process continues."

The furniture and objects jury is led by designer and maker Sebastian Cox RDI and includes design consultant Caroline Till, curator Hugo Macdonald, woodworker Sophie Sellu and Ercol chairman Henry Tadros.

Sebastian Cox, head of the Furniture & Objects judging panel, says: "This year's Furniture and Objects shortlist reflects an exciting range of approaches, from highly considered functional furniture to more experimental and sculptural works, each showing a strong understanding of wood's distinctive qualities and potential.

"It is particularly exciting to see the way designers and makers are challenging themselves to explore new forms, techniques and applications, while retaining a deep respect for the material and the craft involved in working with it.

"Together, these pieces celebrate the creativity, skill and imagination of the UK's contemporary furniture designers and makers, and show the many ways in which wood can be transformed into objects that are both useful and beautifully expressive."

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards is made possible by the generous support of its sponsors and partners: Carpenters' Company, American Hardwood Export Council and Timber Development UK.

Wood Awards
www.woodawards.com

Casadei Busellato Open House: a concrete look into the future

ON 30th SEPTEMBER and 1st October 2026, Casadei Busellato welcomed dealers and customers from around the world to its headquarters in Thiene (Vicenza).

This year's edition confirmed the value of the Open House as an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with various markets, while shining a spotlight on new production trends in woodworking. The two-day event seamlessly combined technological presentations, practical demonstrations, training, in-depth insights into the latest innovations, and a comprehensive showcase of the Casadei Busellato product range.

The main star of the event was the new CNC machining centre for nesting, the Easy Jet X3, which captured the attention of attendees thanks to its versatility, precision, and ease of use. Live demonstrations highlighted its advantages and potential, concretely showing how this solution can meet the demands of modern production environments.



Alongside the Easy Jet X3, the Open House offered a full overview of the Casadei Busellato portfolio, featuring various technologies displayed in the showroom. Among the featured machines were the Flexa 23, Flexa 33, Flexa 43, and Flexa 53XE edgebanders, the Axo 200 beam saw, and the Libra 45 wide belt sander, as well as updates dedicated to the Jet Master CNC machining centre. A selection of solutions capable of meeting the diverse needs for processing, productivity, and flexibility in modern craft workshops and industrial facilities alike.

The presence of such a broad range allowed visitors to examine different technologies up close, aiming to provide every customer with the most suitable solution for their production needs.

Digital services developed by the company through the Easy-2Go Connect IoT system were also front and center at the event, presented through specialised training sessions. Machine connectivity makes it possible to monitor performance and operational status, facilitate support from the Casadei Busellato technical service team, anticipate maintenance needs, and help reduce machine downtime.



Matteo Sammarini, business manager at Casadei Busellato, commented: "Our offering is becoming richer, seamlessly integrating machinery and services. Together with our dealers, we form a single, ever-stronger team with the common goal of supporting and building customer loyalty throughout the entire life of their business. The feedback gathered during the Open House was extremely positive, a sign that gives us confidence in building new partnerships as well."

The Open House proved to be an event capable of looking to the future and showcasing a Casadei Busellato increasingly focused on innovation, digitalisation, and collaboration with its international network. A journey that continues with the mission of providing not only high-performance machinery, but a complete system of technologies and services designed to guide every customer toward smarter, more connected, and sustainable woodworking.

Casadei Busellato
www.casadeibusellato.com/en

FEFPEB President calls for industry unity in final congress speech

THE OUTGOING head of the European Federation of Wooden Pallet and Packaging Manufacturers (FEFPEB) has called for all representatives of the European and international wooden pallet and packaging industry to work together rather than separately to ensure European lobbying messages are consistent and achieve the best possible results for the sector.

Addressing his last FEFPEB congress after 13 years as President, Rob van Hoesel said: "FEFPEB is a federation of country members, individual companies, pallet pools and association members, representing the European pallet industry, lightweight packaging and industrial packaging.

"We always strive for a common approach and succeeded in establishing a recognised position as the representative federation for our whole industry. That is a continuous process."

Duplicating lobbying efforts at the expense of clarity of messaging and representation "is potentially the worse-case scenario for our industry", he said, adding that having different organisations with similar aims in Brussels was "a waste of time and labour" that risks communicating "two different messages, which would be damaging for our industry."

He concluded by calling for unity and a coordinated pooling of resources. "We have a beautiful, sustainable product that is worth fighting for," he said. "I call on everyone here to set aside your personal ambitions and keep our industry united."

Held over three days in the town of Båstad, Sweden, FEFPEB's 73rd congress was themed The Wood Packaging Industry in a Resilient Europe, and welcomed approximately 200 delegates from the European and international wood pallet and packaging sector.

Other speakers at the congress included:

- Viveka Beckeman, CEO of Swedish Forest Industries, who spoke about the size, value, and position of the Swedish forestry industry;
- Leading geopolitical analyst Björn Fägersten, who gave the congress a presentation on external developments that could impact the wood pallet and packaging sector in the coming months;
- Nikhil M Varghese, circular economy director at DGA Group, with a presentation about the latest FEFPEB advocacy on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and status of the new rules, which became applicable on 12th August this year;
- Christina Lundgren of Svenska PEFC and Jan Ihre of Forest Stewardship Council Sweden, discussing forestry certification schemes with moderator Mathias Fridholm, senior advisor at Svenskt Trä (Swedish Wood);
- Christian Nielsen, market expert at Svenskt Trä and Swedish Forest Industries, with an outlook for the availability of timber in key global markets; and
- FEFPEB secretary general Fons Ceelaert with an update on FEFPEB's future strategy, working groups, lobbying activities and more.



Rob van Hoesel.

The congress programme also featured a welcome reception and dinner at Hotel Skansen, Båstad, and a fascinating day learning about the Swedish pallet and packaging industry, including the production facilities of Asljunga Pallen AB and Södra, and to a commercial forest. Here, delegates were given an informative tour and insights into the workings of the forest industry, including tree species that can absorb even greater volumes of carbon, the wide range of naturally sustainable consumer products that can be produced from forests, and modern forest management practices. It concluded with a dinner at the historic 14-hectare Norrviken gardens estate overlooking the Kattegat Sea.



Fons Ceelaert.

Secretary general Ceelaert said: "This is the 73rd time that delegates have met for a FEFPEB congress and thanks to our collaboration with Swedish Wood it was one of the best attended, informative, and enjoyable programmes we have run. The challenges our industry is facing are becoming more complex and international in nature, and together we achieve far more by working together, speaking with one clear voice and making the best possible use of our collective expertise and resources. Since it was founded in 1946, FEFPEB's mission has been to bring our sector together, share ideas, and represent our common interests consistently wherever decisions affecting our future are being made."

FEFPEB
www.fefpeb.eu

Mirka tools up for the North of England Woodworking Show

POWER, PRECISION and dust-free performance are on full display by Mirka UK on stand 71 at the North of England Woodworking Show, 13-15 November at the Great Yorkshire Events Centre, Harrogate.

Spearheading its line-up is the Abranet® range, which over 20 years ago changed the face of sanding. It swapped the conventional paper backing for a net structure, resulting in a highly efficient on-tool dust extraction abrasive, a better finish and a cleaner, healthier workplace. Thanks to Mirka's patented technology, no sanding grain is ever more than 0.5 mm from an extraction hole. Dust is whisked away safely, so the grains keep cutting. Abranet resists clogging and dust build-up, clears easily and gets the most out of every abrasive. Every grade delivers excellent results, and it performs best paired with Mirka's ergonomic power tools and dust extractors.

Mirka's next generation DEROS II and DEOS II orbital sanders now pack a long-life electric motor with 20 per cent more sanding power, making light work of heavy-duty jobs. The sanders have a clearly visible LED speed indicator, and a lockable speed setting. Connect them to the myMirka app via Bluetooth® and operators can monitor vibration levels too.



Comfort is a high priority, as the smooth-running, high-efficiency brushless motors keep noise down and reduce strain over long sanding sessions, while the compact, ergonomic design is easy to use and low maintenance.

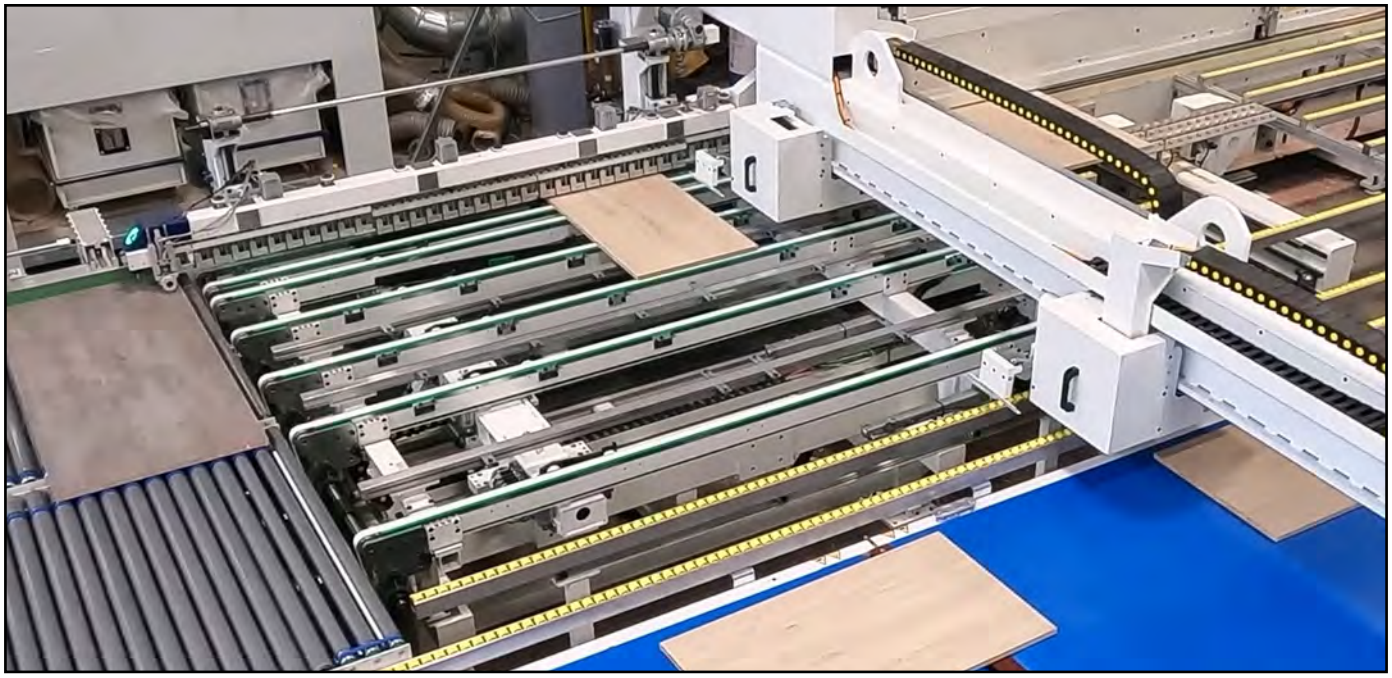
Also on show is the Mirka® DEROS RS 600, built by Mirka's R&D team for demanding, heavy-duty work. Its ergonomic, low-maintenance design stays comfortable over long periods, and paired with a Mirka dust extractor and dust-free abrasives, it creates a cleaner, safer workplace.

"Visitors can see for themselves how our tooling expertise boosts precision, efficiency and productivity," says Neil Newbrook, business sector manager, wood, Mirka UK. "Talk to our technical team, and you'll discover how our specialist service and advice set Mirka apart."

Mirka UK
www.mirka.com/en-gb/



New frontiers in "batch-one" edgebanding



FOLLOWING the interest generated by the 2024 and 2025 editions, which showcased industrial flexible edgebanding solutions adopted by leading customers worldwide, SCM's advanced technology returns to the spotlight with a new event dedicated to batch-one production of panels and doors.

On 2nd and 3rd December, SCM's Batch One Days in Thiene (Vicenza) will offer a first look at some of the latest-generation systems developed for different manufacturing environments, all sharing the need to make production more flexible, efficient and responsive to market demands. The focus will be not only on the high performance of individual machines and systems, but also on their ability to fit into integrated production flows and an increasingly digital factory model.

SCM's new edgebanding and sizing-edgebanding solutions are designed to optimise machining quality, reliability, productivity and customisation, even in the most demanding processing environments. These benefits translate into modular, scalable configurations tailored to each company's needs and level of automation and integration.

The solutions on show reaffirm SCM's strategy of making technologies and functions traditionally associated with higher-end systems available to smaller businesses too, at highly competitive prices.

"At the event, we will showcase the results of our ongoing research and development efforts, aimed at making SCM edgebanding solutions increasingly flexible, modular and accessible, without compromising on excellence," says Luca Bergantini, SCM business manager. "Our goal is to give companies the best balance between investment and solution value, bringing industrial-grade technologies and functions to production environments of different sizes."

As Mr Bergantini points out, this vision applies not only to edgebanding, but to Scm Group's entire offering for furniture and door manufacturers.

At SCM's Thiene industrial site, four industrial-grade solutions will be unveiled to meet different production needs: two cells for flexible edgebanding of straight panels, an automated line for door processing, and an edgebander for softforming profiles.

The first solution, a stefani cell h, marks the next step in SCM's technology for flexible batch-one edgebanding. With a speed reaching 30 metres per minute and output of up to 1,200 panels per shift, it integrates advanced automation and material-flow handling systems, as well as new machining units. Key features include a rounding unit that helps increase productivity and improve finishing quality, ensuring consistent processing, and Maestro active watch supervisory software, which coordinates the process and panel flow.

The second system for straight panels, a stefani cell e, combines a single-sided stefani edgebander, configurable on different platforms (stefani m or stefani x), with a new pickback-e gantry return system designed to provide advanced functionality at an even more competitive investment. The system automatically manages workpiece return and unloading, offering different stacking modes even for panels of different sizes. It can be operated manually or in Batch One mode, with pre-set, automated movements. This modular solution is designed to make industrial-level automation accessible to medium-sized and smaller companies, according to their needs and the degree of process integration.

For the production of doors and partition systems (operable walls), SCM will present an automated solution combining a stefani sb squaring-edgebander with mahros brush systems for loading, workpiece return and unloading. More than 25 metres long, the system is designed to handle large and heavy panels, with a high level of automation and particular attention to finishing quality. The system is monitored by an operator, while material handling is automated.

The solution includes machining units dedicated to door processing, as well as specific devices for finishing corners and profiles, ensuring precise results even on complex, large workpieces.

The line-up is completed by a stefani one edgebander with a roller- and belt-based workpiece return system and electronic set-up, designed to flexibly process a wide range of softforming profiles, including J-shape and 45-degree profiles, and materials such as melamine-faced panels and PVC.

Automatic set-up simplifies changeovers; a dedicated rounding unit also enables finishing of the J profile on the panel's transverse edge, making the solution highly flexible and automated.

Digital control and integration are another key development in SCM's edgebanding solutions. Maestro active watch supervisory software monitors the production process, while WinMES, the MES-MOM developed with Tecnest, a company within SCM Group, links production management with company information and workflows.

Depending on the configuration, these technologies help create a more connected and traceable process, aligned with a digital factory model and integrated production flow.

The aim is to connect edgebanding technologies with the overall organisation of production: not just high-performance machines, but solutions designed to integrate into coordinated, scalable and increasingly automated processes.

SCM Group
www.scmgroup.com/en_GB

AkzoNobel Wood Coatings brings lightness with Soulful Sage™

AKZONOBEL Wood Coatings is bringing AkzoNobel's 2027 Colour of the Year, Soulful Sage™ to industrial wood finishing.



The soft, silvery green, Soulful Sage™ brings a gentle lift to any space, making it feel lighter, calmer and more inviting. Sitting at the heart of three carefully curated colour stories, Soulful Sage™ perfectly captures the mood for 2027, according to the results of the company's extensive annual trend research.

"Our 2027 Colour of the Year is all about creating lighter spaces for a lighter life," explains Heleen van Gent, creative director of AkzoNobel's Global Aesthetic Centre. "Many people are feeling weighed down by world events and overloaded with information. We want to offer a way to create a lighter environment so people can feel that weight lifted off their shoulders."

For manufacturers, Soulful Sage™ offers a versatile starting point for new product and finish development. The supporting colour stories — Glow, Light, and Lift — provide additional routes for building coordinated palettes across furniture, cabinetry, flooring, windows, doors, siding, cladding and other wood products.

Glow is focused on earth tones to create a warm look. Light combines quiet, pale tones and darker shades for a healing mood, while Lift features positive tones that evoke the joy of an inspiring space.

Together, these three stories provide a trend-led colour palette to create distinctive combinations for their customers.

The 2027 colours and finishes can stand alone or be combined with others in the collection, giving manufacturers flexibility to create coordinated looks across a product range. They also work well alongside wood substrates with natural or stained finishes, allowing manufacturers to bring coloured surfaces together with the warmth and character of wood in the same product or collection.

Colour development for industrial wood products is closely linked to the coating system, application method, sheen and opacity, which is why AkzoNobel Wood Coatings' Technical Services and design experts are ready to support customers in achieving the right finish efficiently on their production lines. From colour matching and coating-system selection to application guidance and finish development, they help customers move from a design to a practical, repeatable result.



"Manufacturers need to balance changing design expectations with the practical demands of production," said Henri Bijsterbosch, colour product marketing manager for AkzoNobel's Industrial Coatings business. "Soulful Sage and the three supporting colour palettes give our OEM customers a clear creative direction, while our coatings expertise helps them develop finishes that can be applied consistently and integrated into their production processes."

AkzoNobel's Global Aesthetic Centre has been translating trends into desirable colors for many years. Its annual ColourFutures™ trend forecast meeting brings together in-house experts, international architects, designers and journalists to share insights into how our reactions to the world around us impact our color choices.

AkzoNobel
https://akzonobel-industrial-woodcoatings.com/color-of-the-year-2027



the decorative panels group

YOUR PERFECT PARTNER

dp-limitless REHAU

STUNNING STYLE WITH EVERYDAY PERFORMANCE

Bring the elegance of glass to furniture and interiors with REHAU RAUVISIO Crystal. Offering the look and feel of real glass in both matt and high-gloss finishes, this innovative surface is significantly lighter, more durable and easier to process using standard woodworking tools.

Decorative Panels Lamination supplies RAUVISIO Crystal laminated to MDF in 2800 x 1300mm panel sizes, available in low MOQs as part of the dp-limitless range.

Choose from three distinctive collections: Pure unicolours, Deep Matt metallic shades, and Strong marble and stone-inspired designs.

A cricket pavilion that's not just for cricket…

THE AWARD-winning North Walls Cricket Pavilion builds back better: replacing a dilapidated old building with a new, community-focused, multi-use facility.

The project won the Commercial category of the recent Roofscape Design Awards, run by the Trussed Rafter Association.

"We were asked by Management & Construction Services (MCS Construction) to design and install a truss rafter and glulam feature truss roof for the cricket pavilion at North Walls Recreation Ground," explains Stephen Fuller of Triad Timber Components, the trussed rafter designer on the project.

"The clients were Winchester City Council," he continues. "The project originated in 2018 when a community group came together with the goal of replacing their old, small and dilapidated cricket pavilion with a modern building that could be used by a variety of sports clubs, community groups and local schools."

The new pavilion was designed to be more than just a sports facility — it will serve as a vibrant social hub for the community. The building includes spacious indoor seating, outdoor terraces, and a coffee shop that will remain open year-round, creating a welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike.



Located in North Walls Recreation Park, near the centre of Winchester, the pavilion will provide modern changing rooms, storage facilities, and flexible spaces for local sports clubs, schools, and community groups.

The design emphasises accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that the building can accommodate a wide range of activities. By combining modern architecture with practical features, the pavilion will become a landmark for Winchester, supporting sport, leisure, and social engagement for generations.

The building's structure

The structure itself is distinctive, featuring an arrowhead-shaped footprint. At its widest point, the roof spans 22 m, narrowing to 9 m, with an overall building length of 28 m. This unique geometry required careful planning to ensure both functionality and aesthetic appeal.

The building's width was the first challenge. The main roof sections had to be formed using multiple trusses due to the large





spans, the shape of the roof and low pitches.

"Another major challenge was the 1 m overhangs below the bottom chord, outside of the plate, which needed to accommodate a box gutter," Stephen tells us. "This became even more complex when the client requested that the overhangs support retractable canopies along the exterior of the building. We achieved this by designing girder trusses specifically to carry the additional load.

"On the wider end, the hip boards would have needed to be 14 m long along the ridge and act as a 2,300 mm cantilever with 1 m overhangs, while supporting at least 17 connections. A standard approach wouldn't work, so we designed custom girder trusses."

Due to the lack of internal supports, the design had to find a way to support the central section of the building. This was accomplished using a large asymmetrical hip truss that runs down the main spine, following the ridge and picking up the central ceiling joists and tops of the rafters from adjacent mono trusses.

The shallow end of the truss included double vertical slabs to pick up the glulam ridge beam, which supports the jack rafters forming the vaulted café area. The other end of the ridge beam is supported by a glulam hip truss and two monos connecting from the opposite side to form the large vaulted feature hip ends.

"Pamir software isn't quite designed for this level of complexity, so we had to be inventive to display it correctly," recalls Stephen. "While not structurally required for the design, we issued IFC files to the client, which they integrated into their model. This ensured everyone had an accurate representation of the final building and it avoided surprises like large steel hangers and plates during construction."

Size and complexity: health and safety concerns

Health and Safety was a top priority throughout the design and installation phases. Given the complexity of the roof structure and the size of the trusses, a comprehensive risk assessment was implemented and a method statement drawn up before work began, ensuring all potential hazards were identified and mitigated.

One of the main challenges was the handling and installation of large glulam feature trusses and girder trusses — some exceeding 14 m in length. These required specialist lifting equipment and precise coordination to ensure safe positioning without compromising structural integrity.

"We worked closely with the site team to schedule lifting operations during low-traffic periods and used certified lifting gear operated by trained personnel," Stephen says. "Working at height posed another significant risk. We mitigated this by installing temporary edge protection and using fall-arrest systems for all operatives. Clear exclusion zones were established during lifting operations to prevent unauthorised access to hazardous areas. Weather conditions were also considered, as strong winds could have made lifting operations unsafe. We monitored forecasts daily and postponed work when necessary to maintain safety standards."

All team members underwent site-specific Health and Safety inductions, and toolbox talks were held regularly to reinforce best practices. Communication was key — any changes to the plan were immediately shared with all stakeholders to avoid confusion and maintain compliance. All equipment was inspected and certified before use, and emergency procedures were clearly communicated to the team.

"By prioritising planning, training, and communication, we successfully delivered a complex roof installation without incident, ensuring the safety of everyone involved."

Keeping it low-carbon

Sustainability was another key consideration. The roof design was engineered to accommodate a photovoltaic (PV) panel array. Steel beams were avoided in the roof structure, opting instead for timber and glulam components.

"Glulam beams are not only strong and versatile but also significantly reduce embodied carbon compared to traditional steel solutions," Stephen points out. "All timber used was sourced from certified sustainable forests."

Material efficiency was another priority. The use of engineered timber allowed the team to optimise lengths and minimise waste during fabrication. Offcuts were recycled wherever possible, and suppliers were selected based on their environmental credentials.

The building design incorporates natural ventilation and daylighting strategies to reduce operational energy consumption. Large glazed areas provide abundant natural light, reducing the need for artificial lighting during the day, while the layout promotes airflow to maintain comfortable indoor conditions without excessive mechanical cooling.

A productive learning experience

Working on the project brought home several important considerations for the team. The most significant takeway from the project for Stephen was the importance of clear and consistent communication.

"Due to the size and complexity of the pavilion, we issued construction drawings in stages, which required careful coordination between our design team, the installers, and the client," Stephen tells us. "We learned that providing detailed drawings early and maintaining open communication channels — via phone, email, and WhatsApp — was essential to avoid delays and ensure accuracy on site.

"Overall, this project was both challenging and rewarding. It allowed us to push the boundaries of design and reinforced the importance of communication, flexibility, and collaboration in delivering complex structures successfully."

Stephen Fuller has worked for Triad Timber Components since 2008, working his way up from junior designer, developing expertise in trussed rafters, posi-joists, and timber frame design, and gaining extensive experience using Mitek Pamir software. He now works a varied role as both a lead designer and an operations manager, onboarding new staff and managing Triad's IT infrastructure.

Trussed Rafter Association
www.tra.org.uk

Dalnarrow — a Hebridean cottage restored

DALNARROW Cottage is an old derelict croft building on the Isle of Lismore. Its sensitive restoration — and, specifically, the roof truss design supplied by Pasquill — earned it the accolade of winner of the 2026 Roofscape Design Award for Conversion and Refurbishment Project of the Year.

The design brief for Dalnarrow was to combine the old cottage, its stable, and two byres (cowsheds) into a new, modern home in which the clients could spend their retirement. The end solution looks clean and simple, which is often the case with great design solutions — a testimony to all the hard work and expertise that went into it.



A challenging location

Located within the sea loch called Loch Linnhe, the Isle of Lismore sits between Oban on its east and the island of Mull to its west. It is only accessible by ferry from Oban, which takes about an hour. The original architect's sections specified a raised tie-style truss over the main living room, which would have had to be framed-out onsite to form the curved ceiling.

An effective solution

Eve Macdonald, Pasquill's truss designer on the project, worked closely with the clients over several face-to-face meetings before coming up with the final design. She needed to consider the location, not only from a design loading perspective, but from a delivery perspective, as the site was not only on an island but was accessed via an old farm track only suitable for a tractor.

Eve came up with a prefabricated truss that formed the ceiling curve and removed the need for the onsite framing, significantly reducing the work required to be done on site. The eventual truss solution incorporated a box girder along the ridge line. The box girders length was just over 8 m long and nearly 1.4 m high. In normal circumstances this would not be an issue. However, the transport and site access challenges for Dalnarrow Cottage meant these dimensions were a problem. Eve's solution was to split the box girder into two parts for transport with the use of field splice plates (FSP) to create a full-length girder truss once on site. Supported off the box girder located on the ridge line were bespoke mono trusses incorporating a curved ceiling.



The design solution — a box girder with mono style trusses — also significantly reduced each individual component's weight, meaning truss erecting was safer. Furthermore, there was no need for the joiners on site to frame out a raised tie truss to form the curved ceiling — reducing the amount of time working at height.

Pasquill's design team were very complementary on the usefulness and flexibility of MiTek Pamir Design software. Without Pamir, they commented, it's possible that the project would have ended up as a loose timber roof, cut on site, adding weeks to the build time and the associated costs.

The importance of client communication

The couple converting the property were very approachable and very much appreciated the opportunity to come into the office and discuss the project with Eve. This clear two-way communication was a key part of the success of the project.

"One of the biggest lessons to take away from the project is the importance of customer engagement," Eve comments. "Listening to our customers' challenges and understanding their vision allowed us to come up with a beautifully effective design solution."

Dalnarrow Cottage is a great example of a successful restoration project – repurposing a derelict building into a new beautiful home that retains the character of the original.

Trussed Rafter Association ● www.tra.org.uk

Exclusive Abode showroom display and PoS collection

ABODE, an award-winning designer and distributor of class-leading kitchen sinks, multifunctional taps, bathroom products, and showering solutions, supports its network of kitchen and bathroom retailers with an exclusive collection of showroom displays and point of sale materials that help customers engage, evaluate, and buy.

Leanne Stansfield, digital & marketing director at Abode says, "Due to the sheer variety of design options available, we believe that primary functional components in the home must be brought to life both physically and digitally, to not only encourage memorable customer experiences but also effective product discovery. As part of Abode's continued commitment to supporting independent kitchen and bathroom retailers, we have expanded our showroom display and POS programme, providing partners with an even broader range of tools designed to improve product discovery, customer engagement, and sales conversion. Building on our existing showroom support programme, we continue to invest in new display concepts, sampling solutions, and digital marketing resources, ensuring our retailers have access to a growing suite of sales tools that reflect changing customer expectations."

Unlike single-category specialists, Abode provides UK retailers with a complete product mix that spans boiling & filtered water taps, mixer taps, kitchen sinks, bathroom taps, basins, shower products, and coordinating accessories to create a single-brand product lineup that delivers 'variety without compromise'.

Retail customers need to be able to cut through the noise, and so providing clarity in terms of your product offer through considered displays and promotional assets is essential when turning casual browsing into immediate sales. The Abode showroom display and POS collection is dedicated to all styles of kitchen and bathroom, offering UK retailers market superiority with a range of 'bricks and clicks' marketing tools.

Updated periodically, the Digital Brochure covers all options available, and these currently include:

KITCHEN

- POS stands: Branded single and two-tier black acrylic stands are specially designed to display up to five Abode kitchen mixers including standard and bridge style taps to pull-out and semi-professional taps, handsprays, and the company's award-winning boiling & filtered water taps.
- Aerator case samples: Helping to transform ideas into a finished masterpiece, aerator samples are available in all Abode design finishes and presented in a stylish presentation case, so end users can ensure the best fit in their kitchen.
- Tap finishes display units: From chrome and brushed nickel to popular finishes in brass, gunmetal, and dark bronze, each display unit showcases the full range of tap colours and finishes available by Abode, along with blanking pieces to accommodate stock availability, and regional market preferences.
- Sink swatch samples: Take advantage of Abode's PVD and Granite sink swatch samples, which are supplied in a protective presentation box with handy swatch booklet for customers to easily evaluate colours, textures, and material specifications.
- POS materials and showroom support: Create a strong visual theme and brand message with Abode branded marketing materials. Assets include branded signage, stickers, and strut cards on available products, warranty cards, promotional stationery, and drinkware, and even a dummy boiler system so customers can assess its size and space allowance when purchasing a boiling water tap.

BATHROOM

- Basin swatch samples: Spanning the full range of PVD and RemaStone basins, swatch samples in PVD black and brass, and RemaStone Pebble and Chalk are available in a tailor-made swatch booklet so retail customers can decide on the right product for their bathroom vanity area.
- Tap finish discs: Simply share the full range of bathroom tap finishes using Abode's finish discs in chrome, matt black, brushed brass, matt white, antique brass, and gunmetal. Each swatch is predrilled too, making it easy to thread onto a display hook or rail system to maximise space in showrooms.
- Brassware: Levarto and Aquip brassware, alongside Uno showering solutions can be combined to create a full bathroom suite or wetroom display to inspire and engage your customers.
- POS materials and showroom support: Options include a range of product literature including A5 info cards on each brassware collection, promotional stickers for select models, and display only fixture and fittings that support installation of a concealed valve, showerhead or handshower, for example.

In addition to the company's physical showroom displays and sampling tools, Abode provides retailers with a growing range of digital marketing assets designed to enhance the customer journey both in-store and online. These include branded rolling screen content for showroom displays, digital graphics and campaign assets, high-resolution product imagery, and social media content that helps retailers promote the latest Abode collections. "Together, these resources enable partners to create a consistent brand experience across every customer touchpoint, supporting product discovery, engagement, and sales conversion" adds Leanne.



The company also rewards its retailers for selling and displaying Abode products in their showroom with Accumulate, its exclusive retail loyalty programme. The rewards are quick to build with thousands of prizes ranging from travel and experience days, smart home accessories, and even food and drink.

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New colours, textures and finishes from Decorative Panels Lamination



New colours from SERICA.



REHAU Crystal Strong TORINO Gloss and matt.

FROM RICH, nature inspired colours to tactile metallics and striking stone effects, there is plenty new to discover from Decorative Panels Lamination, with recent additions across both the dp-specialist and dp-limitless ranges offering even more choice for contemporary interiors.

Leading the way within dp-limitless is the completely refreshed RAUVISIO Crystal Strong collection from REHAU. Six new marble and stone inspired designs, Cortena, Nube, Creta, Vela, Torino and Onice, bring the depth and character of natural materials to a highly practical smart glass laminate.

Available in matt and high gloss finishes, RAUVISIO Crystal combines the premium look and feel of glass with advanced polymer technology. Lighter and more durable than traditional glass, it can also be processed using conventional woodworking tools, opening up a wide range of possibilities for furniture, wall cladding, splashbacks and other interior applications.

Decorative Panels Lamination supplies RAUVISIO Crystal Strong laminated to MDF in 2,800 x 1,300 mm panels with low minimum order quantities, making these statement designs accessible for both bespoke projects and larger production requirements. Strong sits alongside Crystal Pure unicolours and the metallic inspired tones of Deep Matt, creating an extensive palette for designers and manufacturers.

There is plenty happening within dp-specialist too, where new colours and finishes introduce some very different looks.

Fineflex Minipearl brings a new dimension to the Fineflex metallic range. Available across the full Fineflex colourway, Minipearl combines the same distinctive pearlescent metallic appearance with a subtle textured surface. It can be used as a matching balancer alongside the original Fineflex finish or as a fascia in its own right, offering greater flexibility to introduce both metallic effects and texture into furniture and interior schemes.

The SERICA range has also grown with the introduction of four new shades, Porcini, Olive,

Nutmeg and Dark Berry. From warm, earthy tones to deeper, more expressive colours, the additions bring even greater choice to the existing palette. Each offers the super-matt, soft touch appearance and practical anti fingerprint properties that make SERICA such a versatile choice for modern furniture and interiors.

Completing the latest additions are Carat Beige and Kombu Green within the Stripes collection. A warm neutral and a nature inspired green, the two shades offer very different design possibilities while fitting naturally into the move towards softer, warmer and more organic interior palettes.

From the sophisticated veining of marble and stone to super-matt colour, metallic effects and tactile finishes, the newest additions demonstrate just how varied the Decorative Panels Lamination portfolio has become.

Working alongside leading surface manufacturers and combining an extensive choice of decorative materials with flexible lamination capabilities, Decorative Panels Lamination gives customers the freedom to explore new looks, introduce emerging trends and create something a little different, all backed by the knowledge, sampling and support of the Decorative Panels team.

Decorative Panels
www.decorativepanels.co.uk



Fineflex Matt Metallics



The new SERICA colours Olive, Dark Berry, Porcini and Nutmeg.



Stripes in Kombu Green.