

SPEC FINISH

FIS

The magazine of FIS
representing the finishes
and interiors sector

www.thefis.org



FIS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR JIM NANIA

FIS key campaigns:

More of the
same – but better

Competency and compliance:

Construction industry
collaborates for a more
compliant built environment

FIS Contractors Awards winning projects:

Rewarding the best
of the best design and
craftsmanship in our sector



We think about fire protection, for every stage of your project

Nowadays, fire protection needs to be top of mind. Rely on Nevill Long's team for the inside knowledge.

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WE ARE TRAINING PEOPLE WE DON'T EMPLOY AND EMPLOYING PEOPLE WE DON'T TRAIN

The paradox at the heart of construction's skills shortage, at a time when we are facing severe labour shortages, when legal definitions of competence are being enshrined in law, we are training people we will never employ and employing people we don't train.

In the context of the finishes and interiors sector, there's around 184,000 construction workers employed from labourers to senior managers. To maintain this 'healthy level' around 5,000 new recruits are needed each year to 2025. According to FIS data, around 40% of our pre-pandemic workforce were migrant EU workers and we relied on around 2,000 new migrants to hit that 5,000 annual recruitment target. Based on Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates, as well as the 2,000 not available due to new migration rules, around 10,000 workers are no longer available. To get back to 'healthy levels', recruitment of indigenous workers needs to rise by around 400% this year (and we need to have trained them by yesterday!) This would have been tough pre-COVID, but hospitality, agriculture, haulage, manufacturing and healthcare are all short of bodies and fishing in the same pond.

Against this backdrop, around 40,000 people in the UK right now are studying construction courses. Most of these (estimates range between 60 and 80%) will drift away when they finish their courses,

never even visiting a construction site. Colleges are businesses – they want to keep these people in training, and against this backdrop too many seem to be slipping through our fingers. This is where the STEM Ambassadors scheme comes in.

Re-instilling pride in our trades

Most of the existing workforce are not plucked from college but trained informally on the job and have been assessed for a vocational qualification (if pressed). I am not knocking the time-honoured tradition of learning on the job, but...how does an employer, against a backdrop of severe shortages, punitive delays and accelerated programmes, spare bodies to show someone else how to do it? FIS advocates training the more mature operatives as coaches and mentors as part of your organisation's succession plan and are working to secure funding support for employers.

In this edition of SpecFinish there are some tips to help refocus recruitment and some inspiring apprentice stories from WorldSkills. We have to start there, doubling down on what we are doing to reach into our local communities and mine the potential, but we all need to get involved.

A highlight of 2021 (yes, despite it all, there were some!) we relaunched our FIS Approved Training Provider Network looking to draw a group of like-minded people who share our values to fix that disconnect between education and industry. We have an expanding group of experts working with us now, some employers setting up their own schools, some colleges and some private enterprises, all committed to collaborating to raise standards and deliver people to our sector. Part of this is about consistency



IAIN MCILWEE
Chief executive
Finishes and
Interiors Sector

of experience and FIS have facilitated the development of syllabuses and materials to support a more consistent journey.

The important point is that the cultural shift isn't just about what we do to recruit, but the process after recruitment, delivering a consistent and quality experience that reduces waste and doesn't end when you get the card, but carries on beyond, re-instilling pride in our trades. Led by the FIS Skills Board, this year we will be working more closely than ever with the Department for Education, CITB and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to fix disconnect between education and industry and ensure our apprenticeships are fit for purpose and well supported. FIS are supporting a traineeship in drylining and monitoring T-Level qualifications to identify how to support work and industrial placements, ensuring more of a focus on employment for students.

The backdrop is complex, but our goal is simple, to ensure that the supply chain, funders, trainers and employers are working better together and, ultimately, we are employing more of the people we are training and training more of the people we are employing.



Welcome

SPEC FINISH

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WELCOME

WELL, that was a year. Without a doubt, 2020 and 2021 will have been the most difficult years that most of us have ever had in business. As if the aftermath of a pandemic wasn't enough to deal with, we've had to factor in Brexit, materials shortages, labour shortages, projects delayed and contracts that simply don't work. But most have survived and some have thrived. We have adapted our ways of working and if someone throws another spanner in the works this year, bring it on, this sector can cope. We can see that in spades throughout this issue. We're not out of the woods yet, but it gladdens the heart to glimpse the superb craftsmanship and design that FIS members produce – the FIS Contractors Awards lunch was held in London last November (see the report on page 16) and besides the chance to meet up with colleagues in person, at last, guests celebrated as award after award went to the most outstanding projects.

The event brought some light relief in a world that still has a lot to face, but a new year often brings a refreshed mindset and new opportunities. With the continued support of FIS (see page 6) businesses in our sector should be confident that 2022 will be better. We feel ready to make progress, rather than simply keeping afloat.

www.thefis.org

Nicky Rogers
Editor





↓ IN THIS ISSUE

06 The transformation agenda

FIS sets its stall out for 2022.



16 FIS Contractor Awards

Acknowledging the very best in our sector.

20 Skills

The future of construction is bright with this talented trainee workforce

21 Legal

Warranties and design liability.

22 Design

How the COP26 aims to achieve zero carbon by 2050 impacts the interior design industry.

24 Information management

Moving away from traditional ways of working towards a digital future.

26 Innovations

How members innovate and collaborate for sustainable long-term value.



29 Community news.

08 News round-up

We highlight what's been happening in the finishes and interiors sector.

10 Skills

Tips to recruit the right people for your organisation.



12 Technical

Mapping out the road to competency and compliance.

14 Sustainability

Leading the transition to low carbon materials.

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REBUILDING CONSTRUCTION

We have lived through the past couple of years as best we can. Without doubt, it has been most difficult time that many of us have ever experienced in business, but throughout, FIS has recognised its responsibilities and has supported its members individually when needed and, at the same time, has continued to take a good look at the sector overall and identified areas where it can influence and improve working practices.

In his AGM address last November, CEO, Iain McIlwee acknowledged the major issues affecting the industry and set out the FIS plans to transform construction.

More of the same, but better: FIS key campaigns

Industry transformation:

“The contractor model is creaking at the seams,” said Helen Tapper, FIS President. “It is a victim of overly complex contracts and ineffective risk management so change is necessary.”

So, in a three-step plan, FIS is working towards:

1. **Modern Methods of Tendering and Procurement.** JCT contracts were established decades ago to share risk fairly through the supply chain, but we have manipulated this system and normal is now contracts with reams of amendments designed to transfer risk, often unfairly and unreasonably. As part of a focus on modern methods of procurement FIS will also be supporting the Conflict Avoidance Pledge, revisiting risk introduced through persistent poor tendering, insufficient time being allocated to packages within programmes, late engagement, retention protocols and unfair payment practices.
2. **Redefining our relationship with the insurance sector.** Concerns over design liability and the escalating cost of and confusion around particularly Professional Indemnity Insurance have escalated as companies have assessed and attempted to offload risk. As we move away from the build and design culture, it is vital to ensure that effective insurance is wrapped around a robust construction process. In 2022 FIS aims to launch FIS Insurance Services, a ‘cooperative’ insurance brokerage and risk management advisory service.

3. Establishing a Building Safety Fund.

The Building Safety Bill brings much positive change, but the retrospective aspects of the Defective Premises Act are a real concern. Where there is genuine negligence, companies must be held to account, but we cannot allow construction to shoulder all the blame for what was, in the case of Grenfell, a total systemic failure. A proportionate Building Safety Fund, levied thinly over a long period is the fairest way to resolve legacy concerns and ensure action is put before blame.

Other campaigns

1. **Materials shortages:** FIS is urging the supply chain to heed the advice of the Construction Leadership Council and apply the lessons learned in 2020 about working in partnership and collaboration.
2. **Skills shortage:** At the AGM Iain McIlwee also said that although workwise, demand remains strong, the labour shortage exacerbated by Brexit has left the industry exposed. To address this, FIS continues to work with training providers to build provision for the new Interior Systems Installer apprenticeship to ensure we have an effective recruitment pipeline of skilled workers we have to find in the UK.
3. **Competency in the workforce:** FIS is working to simplify our competency frameworks and develop new tools to support companies in defining and managing competence within core roles through trade to supervision and management in contractors and within the supply chain.
4. **Net zero:** The FIS Sustainability Working Group is taking a proactive lead to support the UK ambition to net zero carbon by 2050. It aims to influence design and procurement, set targets



- and support standardisation of data collection, create an open network to share best practice, collate and create supporting resources and highlight approaches that help inform change. Work is led by a new addition to the FIS team, our Sustainability Champion.
5. **Data led change:** FIS is commissioning a landmark academic study on procurement practices. The focus will be on how we can collaborate outside of a project to construct a better industry and building the evidence to support change.
 6. **Fit-Out Group:** A new working group looking at the fundamentals of fit-out in the industrial and commercial sector. This group will be about monitoring trends, sharing best practice and improving productivity.
 7. **An upgraded vetting process:** FIS is reviewing vetting processes to help us to build trust that is lacking in construction as an industry and better support our community and project the values we uphold.

The FIS voice is getting stronger and its influence is growing. To read about the campaigns in detail, visit www.thefis.org/about-us/fis-campaigns

PROFAB ACCESS INTRODUCES INDUSTRY FIRST FOR FIRE INTEGRITY AND INSTALLATION

Profab Access has launched a revolutionary certified frame system that sets a new standard for innovation, fire performance and functionality, making installation on site safer, faster and simpler.

THE only product of its kind currently available, the expertly engineered PRECISION adjustable frame completely transforms the installation process for construction professionals and streamlines the specification process for architects and specifiers.

This is achieved through the product's unique construction, which enables the frame to be fully adjusted to meet the specific dimensions of each structural opening, not only ensuring the installation is fit-for-purpose by providing the highest standards in accuracy, but subsequently removing the requirement for plastic packers for a safer, faster and simpler installation process.

The patent pending PRECISION adjustable frame is now supplied as standard with Profab Access' high quality steel INTEGRA 4000 Series Fire Rated Riser Door.

The PRECISION frame dramatically reduces fitting times and eliminates the risk of using non-compliant components throughout installation, which may not have been tested in conjunction with the riser door itself.

Factory applied intumescent strips to the outer frame also eliminate the need for additional intumescent mastic when installing the frame into a flexible or solid wall construction.

Profab Access is the UK's first manufacturer to have its concealed riser doors bi-directionally fire tested and certified by an accredited third party. The PRECISION adjustable frame has also been bi-directionally fire tested as an entire doorset with the INTEGRA 4000 Series Riser Door for up to 120 minutes, receiving the CERTIFIRE accreditation for installation in unlined shaft walls and solid wall construction.

This provides architects, specifiers and contractors with a completely certified solution, as both the frame and the riser door have been bi-directionally tested



The frame precisely adjusts to the dimensions of each structural opening, no plastic packers or intumescent mastic required when installing the frame

as a single doorset, and are supplied with comprehensive documentation to evidence their performance credentials and adherence to all relevant regulations, including BS EN 1634-1:2014 +A1:2018.

Marcus Parnham, Commercial Director at Profab Access, said: "As one of the industry's leading manufacturers, we have a responsibility to push the boundaries of this product category and ensure every access solution we supply delivers the highest standards in performance and compliance.

"Our new patent pending PRECISION adjustable frame represents a real step change for the industry. It supports professionals to fulfil their duty of care by going above and beyond current legislation in delivering the highest standards of due diligence, and achieving constant compliance for the entire doorset, including the materials used throughout the installation process. The frame is the result of our unwavering commitment to innovation and

providing the built environment with the very highest standards in access solutions."

The PRECISION adjustable frame is constructed with an all-in-one smoke, intumescent and acoustic FS1000 seal, eliminating the need for additional intumescent mastic when installing the frame into a flexible or solid wall construction. This cost-efficient and sustainable material contains no halogen compounds and will not emit toxic gas when heated, ensuring the safety of building occupants in the event of a fire.

As an official Made in Britain member, Profab Access' comprehensive portfolio of riser doors and access solutions are manufactured at its headquarters in Atherstone by its experienced team of design and engineering experts.

For further information on Profab Access and its range of riser doors, access panels, and steel doors, call **+44(0)1827 718222** or visit **www.profabaccess.com**

FIS chairs panel discussion at new Workspace Design Show

The Workspace Design Show (WDS), the UK's only exhibition focused purely on workspace design, was held at the Business Design Centre in Islington last November, where FIS Technical Director, Joe Cilia, chaired a panel discussion with Ana Rita Martins, Senior Associate, Sustainability & Design at Woodalls Design, Yorgo Lykouria, Creative Director and founder of Rainlight, and David O'Coimin, Director at Nookpod.

The discussion looked at the way in which product design has been influenced by changes in the way people work and the need to design products and spaces where sustainability is practiced.

Supported by FIS, the next WDS is planned for 27 and 28 February 2023 and will be held at the Business Design Centre in London. Register to attend here <https://workspaceshow.co.uk/register-to-attend>



Joe's panel discussion at WDS

True collaborative working on Sheffield Hallam University's city campus

Construction is due to begin in early 2022 and the campus plans have been developed alongside a number of key partners as part of the collaborative 'Hallam Alliance'. The first of its kind in the UK for a university building programme, the Alliance involves all design, construction and facilities management partners working collaboratively with the client through all stages of design, construction and operation. The Alliance will use the NEC4 Alliance Contract specifically developed in 2018 to create a 'true' alliance arrangement in which the client and all key members of the supply chain, called 'Partners' in the alliance contract, are engaged under a single contract. All members of the alliance have an equal voice and share in the performance of the alliance as whole as opposed to their own individual performance.

Members of the Alliance include Sheffield Hallam University, BDP ARUP (Design), BAM (Construction) and CBRE (Facilities Management).

www.tinyurl.com/mr346wxr

What goes on behind the site hoardings

'Open Doors' is an initiative delivered by Build UK for young people that goes behind the site hoardings to showcase the fantastic range of careers available to them in construction. The 2021 event was held from Monday 4 until Saturday 9 October and offered site visits across the UK as well and live virtual experiences, such as 'meet the apprentice'.

Facilitated by FIS, Philippa Shaw, Careers Leader at John F. Kennedy Catholic School in Hemel Hempstead, took a group of year nine and 11 pupils to Millfield Green, a £32m net zero retirement village of 80 apartments and other facilities in rural Bedfordshire. The visit was hosted by Luke Chambers, Site Manager from Willmott Dixon showed the pupils round the site, giving them the rare opportunity to see and hear about the many processes and jobs involved. They were particularly impressed with the detail of the CAD modelling and the level of planning needed to make efficient use of manpower and resources.

www.builduk.org

Etag Fixings celebrates 10 years

From small beginnings in Bermondsey, London, FIS member, Etag Fixings UK Ltd, has now been supplying and distributing materials to the UK construction industry for a decade and last October, the celebrations began.

www.etagfixings.co.uk



Etag celebrates

Transforming traceability for safer construction

BSI has launched BSI Identify, a new identification technology to bring transparency and product traceability through the built environment supply chain.

BSI Identify harnesses Digital Object Identifier (DOI) technology to deliver a unique, constant and interoperable identifier, (a BSI UPIN), which can be assigned to products to help UK manufacturers directly manage information about their products in the supply chain.

The Construction Products Association (CPA) and representatives from across the built environment supply chain were involved in the development of this new ID system, which is being brought to the market in response to Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of The Building Regulations and Fire Safety, that called for "an identification system that could provide every component in a building with a unique and persistent identification code."

The new DOI system allows product information to be identified and accessed

with certainty and preserves a persistent record. It supports decisions at any point in a products' life cycle; from manufacture, specification, procurement, installation, use, to de-commission or reuse.

Manufacturers can be reassured that their customers always have access to the most up to date information, as the UPIN directs users to a free, enduring and searchable registry where users can access all relevant product information, controlled by the manufacturer.

How it works

Manufacturers are issued with a unique BSI UPIN for every product. The manufacturer can mark or tag their products via QR codes, NFC or RFID tags. Once scanned, the BSI UPIN directs users to an open-access permanent page that holds all relevant and up-to-date product information so all product queries can be routed back to the manufacturer.

Peter Caplehorn, CEO at the CPA, said: 'By moving everything into a fully joined-

up digital process, we can improve overall efficiency, product performance, safety, customer satisfaction, environmental performance and profit margins. BSI Identify is a unique digital identification service that looks to improve industry safety by solving the challenge of product identification.'

FIS Technical Director, Joe Cilia, added: "Being able to access product information at the point of installation or even years after it's been integrated in the fabric of a building is vitally important if we are to maintain buildings for the safety of all occupants in future. BSI Identify will allow this to happen using a database that will be available in perpetuity, even if the company is no longer in business, and that's a game changer."

Find out more about BSI Identify at <https://identify.bsigroup.com/>

Watch this video to see how BSI Identify works: www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBepB2HSUAs

A £25 million Scottish fund to improve ventilation in business premises

SME businesses in Scotland will be able to claim back costs of up to £2,500 to undertake work such as the installation of CO₂ monitors and remedial improvement work to windows and vents.

Businesses will be able to fill in a self-assessment form to receive advice on improving their current ventilation systems and identify if they are eligible for financial support from their local authority.

Further details of the grants, including eligible sectors, is available here

www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/service/funding/business-ventilation-fund

Help to adopt new digital technologies

Launched in December 2021, Help to Grow: Digital (HtGD) is a government-backed scheme to help SMEs choose, buy and adopt digital technologies that will help them grow their business.

The Help to Grow: Digital scheme will offer businesses free, impartial advice and guidance about what digital technology is best suited to their business and how it can boost their business' performance. It will also provide targeted financial support for eligible businesses, worth up to £5,000, towards the costs of buying approved digital technologies for the first year.

To register your interest visit <https://register-help-to-grow-scheme.service.gov.uk/>

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We have an industry to be very, very proud of. Turn to page 20 to see how a talented trainee workforce is shaping up to be part of a bright construction future.

RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION

Are you an employer in the finishes and interiors sector that is considering recruiting people for your organisation?

I used 'next generation' in the headline to catch your eye. When I think about 'next generation' I think about people who are younger than I am, so that covers 16 to 64-year-olds and, to be fair, there cannot be any discrimination in the way organisations attract and recruit people. That said; society has developed along with workplaces and jobs and technological advances alone have brought communication speeds that the

world has never had before. So, get your recruitment process wrong and a lot of people will get to know about it very quickly.

So here are some suggestions to consider when your organisation is considering recruitment, it may be useful to apply the following steps:

Step 1: Identify the organisation's recruitment needs. This sounds easy and it can be as simple as "we need someone to do

job A"; but what is job A? How long will your organisation need an individual to do job A? Where does the role for job A fit in your current organisational structure? What are the skills and knowledge needed for an individual to competently work in job A and be effective for the organisation? Does the role have legislative mandatory requirements?

There are probably many more questions to ask particularly if you are



George Swann,
FIS Skills and Training Lead

looking to fill a new role, so it's well worth conducting a simple job analysis by listing the expected duties. If the role is new to your organisation but exists in other organisations, there are a number of references that can be used to provide you with details of the job criteria:

- the first is the Office for National Statistics and the Sector Occupational Classification Codes that list more than 80,000 occupations recognised in the UK; (www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassificationsoc)
- then there is the National Occupational Standards (www.ukstandards.org.uk) that list the minimum level of competence for tasks within occupations, there are over 700 of these for construction occupations; and
- if you are considering a new entrant to be trained into the role, take a look at the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website (www.instituteforapprenticeships.org) and the Apprenticeship Standards. Although these standards apply to England, they will be a useful source of job criteria to organisations based and working in the other home nations. There are some brief details on the CITB Go Construct website (www.goconstruct.org), at the time of writing it is understood this information is being updated.

Learning programme

Bear in mind if you are recruiting young people or career changing new entrants, it's unlikely they will have all of the knowledge and experience your organisation needs. If you want the new recruit to be capable of full speed straight away expect to be disappointed. Your organisation will need an infrastructure capable of nurturing and developing the new entrant. It is no good relying totally on a training provider or throwing them in with experienced staff and expecting them to learn using the 'sitting by Nellie' theory.

Just paying another 50 pence an hour to a supervisor and expecting them to continue doing their day job while mentoring and coaching a new entrant does not work either. It is as important to have a programme of learning for the workplace as it is for the training environment, a good training provider will help employers with this and may provide training in coaching and mentoring skills. Your organisation will need someone with the abilities to coach and mentor new entrants of any age, someone like an 'apprentice master', a job role that is starting to appear in the medium and large organisations of the industry.

Step 2: Prepare a job description, this is a useful reference for every role in every organisation and if you need to recruit new people for an existing role, having an existing up-to-date job description will save conducting a job analysis. It also helps when it comes to performance reviews and the job description can be amended and updated during this process as the role and job develops, embracing new technology or more efficient methods of work. Regular performance reviews for new entrants provide valuable feedback for the individual and for the organisation. You may wish to consider setting target milestones for new entrants, giving the individual something to aim for with incremental achievement rewards when the required skills and knowledge are demonstrated.

Step 3: Devise a recruitment strategy, from which a process can be derived. Get it right and you'll only recruit once or twice in a working lifetime for each role unless your organisation is expanding. Get it wrong and it can become a constant frustration for all involved. Communication is the key, use as many streams as possible to advertise the vacancy.

An organisation's recruitment strategy will complement an organisation's succession plan. If you think about it; nobody works forever, the lucky ones who are still racing the clock will retire eventually. In the same way, an ambitious individual will work to be promoted within the organisation or they will move to another organisation that has a vacancy. Has your organisation got a development strategy linked to your succession plan and a recruitment strategy formulated to replace key personnel and attract new entrants?

Your organisation may outsource recruitment, but it's worth taking a look at the Talent Retention Scheme, before paying for a recruitment service. When recruiting young people and new entrants there's a lot of good free of charge support for employers including:

- National Apprenticeship Services; (<https://contact.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/>)
- TalentView; (www.talentview.org)
- Job Centre Plus; (www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus)
- CITB Advisors; (www.citb.co.uk)
- local colleges and/or universities; and
- members can use the FIS Job Spot (www.thefis.org/jobspot) to advertise vacancies.

Step 4: Design a screening process to sift and shortlist applications. You may wish to see a curriculum vitae from the applicants, or they could be required to complete an application form derived from the job description, requesting examples of relevant experience and knowledge can often reveal

a match. It's important to include the vacant roles line manager in this part of the process and it is an opportunity to temper this individual's expectation, the recruitment process will not always provide someone who's instantly up to speed.

Step 5: During the interview process it is important to ask questions, but it is just as important to listen, and selection interviews are about making a judgement on what is heard. To avoid preconceptions and stereotyping, interviewers need to be trained in interview techniques. It may be useful to include someone on the interview panel who is neutral and not invested in the recruit because they often spot details others don't.

Step 6: People looking for work or an apprenticeship position don't often apply for one job at a time, so if you find what you deem to be the right candidate, make an offer, don't keep the individual hanging about as it's likely the best candidates will go to another organisation.

Step 7: Employee induction must be integrated into the recruitment strategy, like a training programme, it must be structured and there should be confirmation that the individual has assimilated enough information to survive. Richard Branson said: "Train your people so they can leave at anytime and treat them so they do not want to leave," people judge early and the induction process will have an impression on your new recruit.

STEM Ambassadors

Between 6 and 10 December 2021, STEM Learning delivered an interactive, virtual reality careers fair aimed at 14-19-year-olds interested in finding out more about apprenticeships. Set in an online exhibition hall, allowing around 30 employers from across the UK the opportunity to use pre-recorded videos, 'pull-up' banners and PDFs to let students know more about their company or industry and the opportunities available. Employers also had the chance to interact directly with young people who visited exhibition stands through a safeguarded, text-based live chat function. FIS Skills and Training Coordinator, Catherine Bullough and Skills and Training Advisor, Marie Flinter, represented FIS as Construction STEM Ambassadors. If you want to know more about the Construction Stem Ambassador network, give FIS a call and keep an eye on the FIS news for details of future Job Fairs.



If you need help with recruiting, please contact FIS on:
Tel: **0121 707 0077** or
Email info@thefis.org

MAPPING OUT THE ROAD TO COMPETENCY AND COMPLIANCE

Dame Judith Hackitt was clear in her interim report of Building Regulations and Fire Safety that there has been a lack of evidence of compliance and competency, and she was even clearer that the industry needed to address this. **Joe Cilia, FIS Technical Director**, reports on what has happened since then and questions whether we have a clear road to follow.

A complex problem has been broken up into its constituent parts and addressed by more than 100 organisations, including FIS, dedicating cumulative thousands of hours to interrogate information and advice and propose better ways of working. With work led by the Industry Response Group (IRG) and the Technical Expert Panel (TEP), the work of these groups and the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill is coalescing to provide a clear direction of travel addressing the linked issues of competency and compliance.

To help structure our efforts and uncover how a number of new initiatives will lead to tangible changes to the way we market performance products, the words we use to describe them and the skill, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB) needed to specify, purchase, supervise, install and maintain them; we have developed and updated a map that starts to identify the initiatives that are linked and give us an idea of where this will lead.

It's about competency

A competency steering group and 13 working groups were established to address the issue across the supply chain, with one overarching group to coordinate the results and a market integrity group (MIG) which would look specifically at how performance products were described and their performance verified.

The 13 working groups are:

- overarching competence body (WG0);
- engineers (WG1);
- installers (WG2);
- fire engineers (WG3);
- fire risk assessors (WG4);
- fire safety enforcing officers (WG5);
- building standards professionals (WG6);
- building designers, including architects (WG7);
- building safety managers (WG8);
- site supervisors (WG9);
- project managers (WG10);
- procurement professionals (WG11); and
- products competence (WG12).

The first output from the group is a document called 'Raising the Bar', which was presented at the Construction Products Association (CPA) conference in October 2019.

(Read the report here:

<https://tinyurl.com/5n7kf7f5>)

The report represents 12 months' work by more than 150 organisations from across the construction, built environment, fire safety and owner/manager sectors, which have come together to improve the competence of those procuring, designing, constructing, inspecting, assessing, managing and maintaining higher risk residential buildings (HRRBs).

Setting the Bar is the second and final report of the Competency Steering Group (CSG) and is an update of the interim report, Raising the Bar, published in August 2019.

(Read the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/3pfd4w>)



Feeding into this report, for example, is the work we have been involved in from WG12 on products competence; the development of a construction products competence framework, which will help manufacturers define the level of expected competence to specify, procure, supervise and install their products. Based on SKEB it will help ensure the correct products are used alongside all products they interact with to create building systems.

Competence framework standard

The Built Environment Competence Standard Group (BECS) is the industry-led programme sponsored by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which will deliver an overarching competence framework standard for everyone working on a building.

This is intended to be used by key professions and trades including designers, contractors, fire risk assessors, building managers and others in specialist technical or corporate roles.

The framework will provide a set of core principles of competence, including leading and managing safety, communicating safety, delivering safety, risk management, regulations and processes, building systems, ethics and fire/life safety.

The competence framework was developed as an overarching standard using an iterative and dynamic process called BSI Flex.

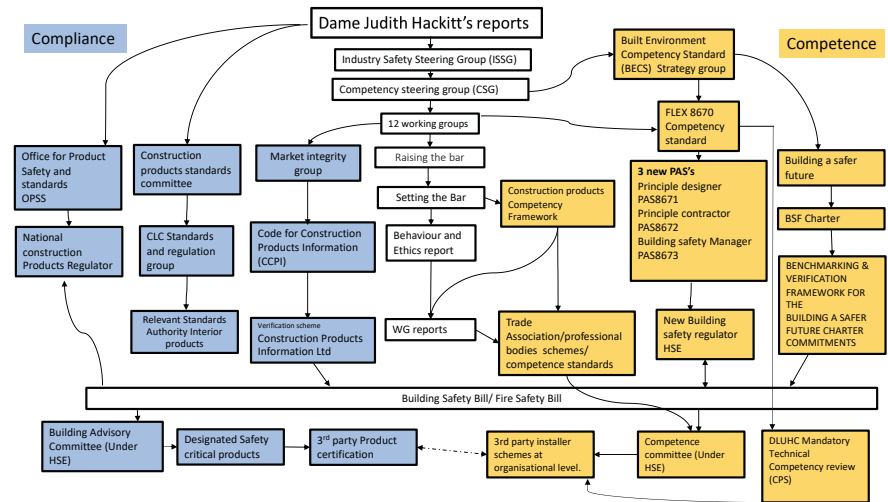
BSI Flex 8670: Built environment

BSI Flex 8670: Built environment, sets out core criteria for building safety and is designed to provide a framework for the development of three new PAS documents

to describe the competency levels for the three new positions described in the (Draft) Building Safety Bill:

- principal designer PAS8671;
- principal contractor PAS8672; and
- building safety manager PAS8673.

The competency of these people will be overseen by the new Building Safety Regulator under the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). (Find BSI Flex 8670 here: www.bsigroup.com)



Competence and compliance landscape map

Building a Safer Future Charter

In April 2020, the UK Government encouraged industry-wide commitment to sign up to the Building a Safer Future Charter, in its response to the 'Building a Safer Future' consultation 'A reformed building safety regulatory system'. In early 2020, the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) was appointed to develop and manage the charter and FIS is proud to be amongst the first signatories.

It's about compliance

Looking beyond competency to other elements of compliance, the Construction Products Standards Committee has been formed. This committee will comprise technical experts and academics and it will advise the Secretary of State for Housing on whether voluntary industry standards for construction products should also become UK regulatory standards, a role currently undertaken by the European Commission. The Construction Products Standards Committee will also provide advice and recommendations on the conformity assessment process and product test standards. In particular, the Construction Products Standards Committee will advise on:

- the assumptions and weaknesses within the current testing regime, including the effectiveness and accuracy of current tests;
- ways to improve the testing regime and new tests to address the weaknesses; and
- innovation in how construction products are tested.

Organisations, such as FIS will be feeding into this group (via the Construction Products Association), helping to deliver a new rigorous and proportionate process for proving compliance.

Alongside this work the Marketing Integrity Group (MIG) published their Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI). The CCPI is a code for all construction product manufacturers (including distributors) to ensure that consistent terminology is used, that performance claims are evidence based and have been signed off by the competent technical person in the organisation.

A new body, called Construction Products Information Ltd, will provide a verification scheme for suppliers wishing to sign up to the code.

Measuring competence and compliance

It's clear that we are reaching a stage where change is coming and the framework for measuring competence and compliance is being constructed using new legislation that will be built on rapidly over the next months and years.

The Chief Executive Officer at Construction Products Information Ltd, Amanda Long, said: "We are constantly receiving stark reminders of the challenges facing the industry in improving building safety and rebuilding trust following the Grenfell Tower disaster. There is much work going on across the sector to seek to address these very real deficits and support risk reduction. An important part of that landscape is the Building a Safer Future Champions benchmarking process and Code for Construction Product Information. Both bring rigour and independent assessment to help raise the bar in relation to compliance and competence in building safety.

"We are pleased to have the support and engagement of FIS on this journey and look forward to working together to progress this crucial agenda."

It's about collaboration

In this map (above) I have attempted to show how these committees, working groups, legislative changes standards, documents, reports and bodies come together and how they will start to lead to a more compliant built environment. An encouraging start has been evidenced by the spirit of collaboration across the sector, bringing us into contact with new individuals, organisation and perspectives on some age-old problems.

Commenting on the work towards a compliant built environment, Peter Caplehorne, Chief Executive at the CPA, said: "A significant number across the construction sector are very conscious that standards need to be raised. At the centre of this is the level of competence across all areas.

"A huge amount of work has been going on in recent years to address this issue and it is heartening to see this now maturing. To achieve any measure of success cross sector collaboration is key. FIS has been at the centre of much of this work; raising awareness and supporting the many channels of activity.

"The CPA have been delighted to support and collaborate with the FIS on this journey and look forward to seeing this hard work bear fruit creating an industry for the future that is fully fit for purpose."

LEADING THE TRANSITION TO LOW CARBON MATERIALS

At COP26 last November, the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) launched the UK Roadmap for achieving a net zero carbon built environment by 2050. In this feature, we show how a selection of FIS members are stepping up to the mark.

The built environment is directly responsible for 25% of the total UK carbon footprint so, has a critical role to play in the national transition to net zero. Co-created by industry, the Whole Life Carbon Roadmap provides a set of actions for achieving a net zero UK built environment by 2050.

It quantifies the specific emission reductions across sub-sectors of the built environment that will need to take place to meet the 2050 deadline. It establishes a net zero emissions budget and trajectory to 2050, consistent with wider UK carbon targets and budgets as set out by the Climate Change Committee (CCC), enabling government and the UK built environment to benchmark progress.

www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-whole-life-roadmap-for-the-built-environment

Leading the transition to low carbon materials

Established in 2014, FIS member, Adaptavate, rethinks and redesigns the way building materials are produced, used and disposed of. It is a 'regenerative' business that takes an innovative approach to the design and manufacture of carbon negative building materials by combining nature and science.

Adaptavate and partner universities are leading the way in CO₂ sequestration in building materials and industrial processes, helping us reach the ambitious targets set by governments and industrial bodies.

Tom Robinson is the founder of Adaptavate. He was named 'Shell Young Entrepreneur' in 2016, which helped him to begin to innovate and design low-carbon materials for healthy buildings that cause no harm people in the future. By combining nature and science, his building solutions

are designed to turn lime and CO₂ into carbon negative construction products.

Then in October 2020, Adaptavate joined a £500,000 development project co-funded by Innovate UK (the UK's Innovation agency) to help mainstream the production, manufacture and availability of carbon negative building materials.

Tom said: "A building's skin is crucial to its functionality. Our clothing could be considered to be a second skin and the buildings that we live and work in are very much a kind of third skin. They are critically important to our health and wellbeing and we need to consider how to skin buildings more responsibly and naturally."

Adaptavate has developed biodegradable plasterboard, Breathaboard, from compostable crop waste, and Breathaplasta, a high performance, environmentally friendly and breathable lime plaster alternative to cement and gypsum plasters. Designed to mix, apply and set much like a modern gypsum plaster, this bio-composite product helps to also regulate indoor moisture and improve insulation. All the components are natural and sustainable. They are also completely biodegradable and non-toxic, the waste or off-cuts can be composted or used as soil conditioner. Breathaplasta is rapidly moving towards the mainstream.

"Our main aim for 2021 was to get plaster closer to people's walls and trade peoples vans. Our partnership with SIG and Travis Perkins has really helped do this. Our membership with FIS plays a crucial role in our other focus area of raising awareness" Tom says. "If we are to lead the transition to a healthier, lower impact construction industry of the future, it needs collaboration between innovative pioneering and influential mainstream industry bodies to bring about this impact on a large scale. These are exciting times!"



Breathaplasta featured throughout The Conduit Club, Mayfair

Adaptavate recently joined the FIS Sustainability Working Group (www.thefis.org/membership-hub/working-groups/sustainability-working-group) to embrace positive ecological change and regeneration. They want to influence behavioural change in the construction industry and contribute to the FIS Net Zero campaign.

www.adaptavate.com

Manufacturer reduces carbon emissions

In October 2021, Siniat, manufacturer of interior and exterior materials for drywall construction, reported a 17% decrease in CO₂ emissions per tonne in 2020 compared to 2010, and a reduction of 38% over the past three decades. These results are ahead of the sector's 10-year target (10%) and the company's own science-based 30-year target (35%).

Find out more in their sustainability report: www.etex-bp.co.uk/sustainability

FIS signs Pallet LOOP Charter

The FIS is the first trade body to sign the Pallet LOOP Charter, which delivers a simple way of eliminating avoidable pallet waste.

The Pallet LOOP is a new venture designed to deliver a change in the transportation of building materials throughout the UK. Through its deposit-based scheme, The Pallet LOOP will remove the need to harvest 4,500 acres of trees every year to feed current linear pallet practices. This in turn will reduce related industry CO₂ emissions by up to 70% and cut construction waste by around 10%.

Pallet LOOP founder, Paul Lewis, said: "The drive for more sustainable ways of working has never been stronger, this topic is now championed at board level, scrutinised by stakeholders and expected by consumers."

By signing The Pallet LOOP Charter, FIS acknowledges that it is time for change. Currently, UK construction consumes 18 million pallets each year, achieving a reuse rate of less than 10% – significantly less than FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) retail, where pallet reuse is now the standard. This practice is clearly unsustainable.

In the finishes and interiors sector alone it is estimated that there are around 25 pallets used per £100,000 of turnover.

Supporters of the Charter commit to:

- a comprehensive evaluation of how The Pallet LOOP could be integrated within our sector;
- championing the adoption of a circular economy pallet solution that reduces associated CO₂ emissions, delivers improved safety and increases supply chain resilience through standardisation; and
- cooperating with other industry stakeholders to accelerate sector wide implementation – conscious that there is no Planet B and that that we must act now and adopt more sustainable supply chain and distribution solutions.

On signing the Charter, FIS CEO, Iain McIlwee, said: "The shift in gear needed to help us get where we need to be as a sector is about looking at what we can each individually and collectively do to make a difference now. Logistics is key to enabling change and within this a focus on eradicating single use pallets makes perfect sense. We hope that finding a formula here will be a catalyst for change that can accelerate collaboration and focus the supply chain on practical steps to a practical, circular economy".

Members of the FIS community that have also signed the charter include Meronden, Willmott Dixon, BDL and Platt and Reilly.

You can find out more about Pallet LOOP at www.thepalletloop.com

or via the BBC Short featuring Pallet LOOP here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/business-59207678>

World-leading Environment Act becomes law

Legislation will improve air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, halt the decline of species, and improve our natural environment.

The Act will help the transition to a more circular economy, incentivising people to recycle more, encouraging businesses to create sustainable packaging, making household recycling easier and stopping the export of polluting plastic waste to developing countries.

These changes will be driven by new legally binding environmental targets, and enforced by a new, independent Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) which will hold government and public bodies to account on their environmental obligations.

Commenting on the Act, Iain McIlwee, FIS CEO, said: "This Act becoming law is the unequivocally the dawn of a new era. Whilst we have had numerous stuttering attempts at delivering a more sustainable economy, we have not seen the legislative imperative that will ultimately ensure we deliver it. Contained in this Act is the ability to apportion responsibility and compel businesses to behave differently. In our sector, the pressure on the producers of waste (manufacturers or contractors) will start to be felt within projects, and access to finance is likely to become increasingly linked to our ability to demonstrate sustainability.

"At FIS we are ready to do our bit and support our members not just in meeting the requirements, but working with the wider supply chain to ensure that responsibility is shared and change isn't just about contractualisation of responsibility but collaboration and that procurement considers a value-based approach not just based on costs.

"It is a positive start to what will be a challenging journey, but one we have to take".

Innovate UK is part of Research and Innovation (UKRI), the national funding agency investing in science and research in the UK. Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UKRI brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/innovate-uk

FIS Members wishing to update or develop a Carbon Reduction Plan can visit the FIS Sustainability Hub for resources and ideas or contact FIS Sustainability Champion, Flavia Lowres to discuss ideas and options. www.thefis.org/knowledge-hub/sustainability flavielowres@thefis.org

Download the Net Zero Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for the UK Built Environment here: <https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-whole-life-roadmap-for-the-built-environment/>



THE BEST OF THE BEST

After almost two years of relative seclusion, our community gathered last November to honour the very best in our sector and pay tribute to some superb craftsmanship and design.

The FIS Contractors Awards lunch, held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London, was the perfect opportunity to catch up with colleagues and celebrate some outstanding projects. Independent FIS Award judges, Tony Pieri and Clive Perry, had a tough job to select winners in each of the

nine categories and, in some cases, only decimal points separated winners from runners-up.

Only FIS members can enter projects and be recognised for the quality of their work at this event, and the resulting publicity across all FIS publications and websites brings significant publicity to winners.

2021 Project of the Year: BW Shrimpton for the Crescent Hotel and Spa, Buxton

Guest architect, Darren Ross-Dreher, of architectural practice, Gensler, announced the winner of the 2021 Project of the Year, which he selected from the gold award winning projects.

Award sponsored by Minster



Interior fit-out over £1m Gold Award: BW Shrimpton for the Crescent Hotel and Spa, Buxton

The judges said: "BW Shrimpton meticulously and painstakingly rebuilt the interiors of this dilapidated building by sympathetically integrating new works and fire protection materials into existing features. The Grade 1 listing restricted where and how the team could fix new materials, but a high degree of ingenuity, skill and collaboration resulted in a superb end result."



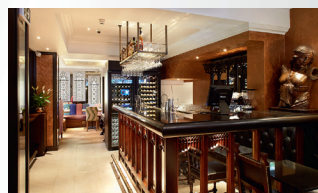
Interior fit-out up to £1m Gold Award: Tapper Interiors for Minoli Head Office and Distribution Centre, Oxford

The judges said: "Tapper Interiors created a modern, sophisticated, clean, functional interior that seamlessly complemented the client's flooring products installed throughout the project. All this was the result of works being executed to a very high standard and a high level of collaboration with a client who was omnipresent throughout."



Interior fit-out over £1m Silver Award: Bushcrafted for Julie's Restaurant, London

The judges said: "This is a product of high design and feasibility input, together with excellent workmanship from Bushcrafted to create a really impressive, bespoke interior."



Interior fit-out up to £1m Silver Award: Veitch Interiors for Menstrie IST Laboratory Building, Clackmannanshire

The judges said: "A top quality, well fitted project where expertise in installation, design and collaboration achieved an excellent result. Veitch collaborated effectively with all trade contractors, the design team and the client to create a high-quality fit-out using bespoke products."



Event sponsors

Headline sponsor: Ecophon

Silver event sponsors: Drywall Pro-Cut, Forza Doors, QIC Trims and Zentia

Bronze award sponsors: Go Interiors, SPIT



Partitioning Gold Award:
i Wall for Vodafone, London

The judges said: "The overall project is of the highest quality, with i Wall creating a clean, modern, stylish look with strong acoustic performance, giving the client the space they required and the desired level of confidentiality."



Drywall Construction – commercial Gold Award:
Manorcrafft Interior Systems for International Conference Centre Wales, Newport

The judges said: "Manorcrafft confronted many challenges in delivering an excellent commercial drywall installation in a multi-functional building. The working heights and architectural detailing tested the very limits of conventional drywall, and all of this was achieved against a speeded up that required active collaboration with preceding and following trades. The final result is stunning and highlights the dedication, hard work and meticulous attention to detail that Manorcrafft creatively applied to this very prestigious project."



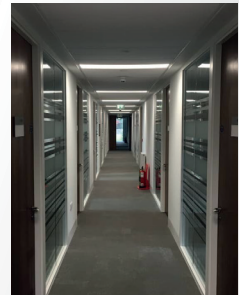
Partitioning Silver Award:
Bespoke Construction Services for Kuehne+Nagel, East Midlands Gateway, Derby

The judges said: "Throughout the project, work was executed with a high degree of precision, creating an impressive highly functional office workspace."



Drywall Construction – commercial Silver Award:
Taylor Hart for University House, University of Birmingham, West Midlands

The judges said: "Taylor Hart applied a considerable degree of skill and ingenuity in delivering a high-quality drywall installation for new offices and learning spaces, as well as an impressive atrium area, at the University of Birmingham. The offsite manufacture not only facilitated a speedier fix but resulted in a more precise overall quality finish."



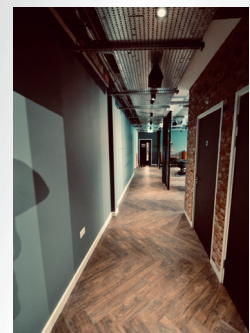
Drywall Construction – residential Gold Award:
Conneely Drylining for One Blackfriars, London

The judges said: "All of the work was executed with a high level of precision and attention to detail, resulting in a top-quality final installation that complemented the challenging requirements of a six-star central London residential development."



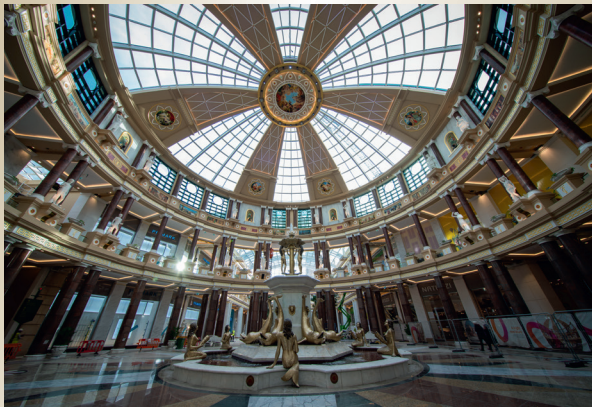
Drywall Construction – residential Silver Award:
Drywall Contracts for Vita Pebble Mill, Birmingham

The judges said: "Drywall Contracts was fully aware that logistics would be paramount in delivering this project and applied lateral and collaborative thinking to the challenge to deliver a high-quality project ahead of programme."



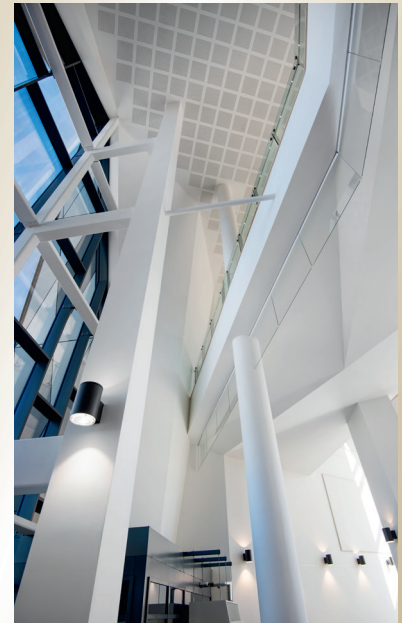
Plastering - fibrous and GRG Gold Award:
 Ryedale Interiors for Barton Square,
 The Trafford Centre, Manchester

The judges said: "To take on a project of this magnitude and complexity required a huge degree of ingenuity, meticulous planning, high-quality workmanship, proactivity, value engineering and collaboration with all parties involved. The finished result is simply stunning and highlights the extraordinary work on all fronts that Ryedale executed throughout the contract."



Steel Framed Systems Gold Award:
 AT Jones for Poole Gateway,
 Bournemouth University, Dorset

The judges said:
 "A high proportion of the work was only accessible externally using mobile elevating work platforms and cherry-pickers, often at above 20m. AT Jones exercised an enormous amount of skill, ingenuity and determination to deliver a truly stunning final result."



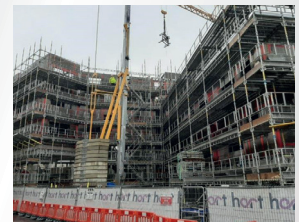
Plastering - fibrous and GRG Silver Award:
 Fine Art Mouldings for The Cigar Bar,
 Wilton Place, London

The judges said: "All the works on this project have been executed to the highest possible quality, demonstrating the significant level of skill and ingenuity Fine Art Mouldings exercised in delivering such an interesting and unique project."

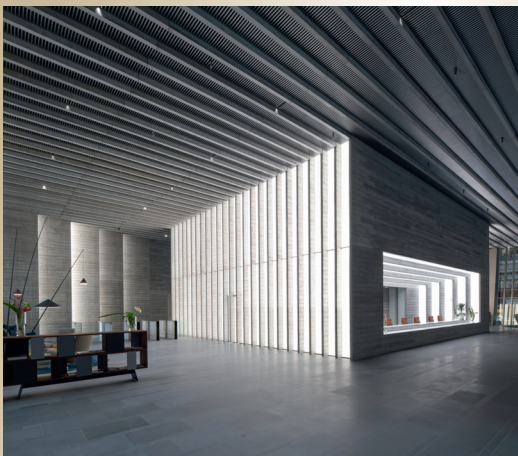


Steel Framed Systems Silver Award:
 Veitchi Interiors for Cannonmills,
 Edinburgh

The judges said: "Without doubt, Veitchi - Cannonmills 3 logistics was going to be a major challenge, with the external scaffold cantilevered over the river. But virtually all components were manufactured and assembled off-site and then delivered in sequence for installation. As a consequence, the structure was completed to a very high standard ahead of programme."



Suspended ceilings Gold Award:
 Integra Contracts for 70 St Mary Axe, London



The judges said:
 "To meet the challenges of a ceiling assembly of this nature, Integra came up with a unique suspension system. The finished result is exceptional - in the double-height space of this spectacular reception area, the ceilings reflect the external cladding lines to create a unique, dramatic space. Top quality work from Integra."

Suspended ceilings Silver Award:
 Roskel Contracts for Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh

The judges said: "Many of the metal sections had to be hand curved on site to accommodate the vagaries of the building design. And in some cases, the void depth was limited, making the fitting of sections a further challenge. However, all these complications and challenges were overcome, creating a striking overall ceiling finish that not only looks impressive but performs acoustically to a very high level."



Operable walls Gold Award:

Style Door Systems for Frederick Douglass Building, Newcastle University, Tyne and Wear

The judges said: "The final result is spectacular! When in operation, these huge panels seemingly float through the air like something out of a Harry Potter film. A truly wondrous, hugely technical installation, expertly designed and installed by Style."



Plastering - heritage Gold Award:

Ornate Interiors for Greenbank House, Liverpool

The judges said: "It is simply stunning, an excellent example of how Ornate's specialist knowledge was used in the initial planning stages to alleviate problems and develop solutions during a challenging restoration."



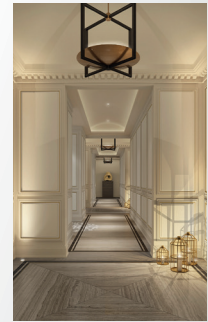
Operable walls Silver Award: Hufcor for International Conference Centre Wales, Newport

The judges said: "Hufcor, which was involved from the early concept design to the final working installation, employed a huge amount of practical creative involvement and delivered an excellent final result befitting such a prestigious conference centre."



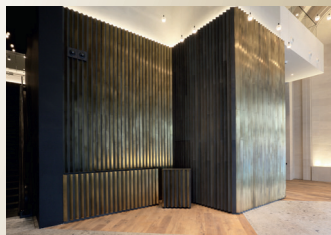
Plastering - heritage Silver Award: George Jackson for Langley Park House, Slough

The judges said: "The final installation is of the highest quality. Around 50% of the decorative features had to be replaced, but the replacements, together with a myriad of handcrafted alterations on site, integrate seamlessly into what is a truly spectacular final result."



Specialist joinery Gold Award: Stortford Interiors (UK) for 135 Bishopsgate, London

The judges said: "The extensive variety of joinery elements integrates seamlessly while having a striking characteristic of their own. Stortford had a high level of involvement in the design process, its considerable expertise, creative thinking and workmanship have delivered an exceptional result."



Lifetime Achievement Award: Jim Nania

Every now and again in our sector, there comes along a person so active, so successful and revered that their name and the businesses that they lead become synonymous with the sector itself. The FIS owes Jim Nania a great debt of honour for being instrumental in the mergers of various fit-out trade bodies over a period of more than 30 years, resulting in the FIS as it stands today. In that time, he has been both board member and President on several occasions. He is retiring from the board early this year and FIS will be poorer for it.



(L-R) FIS President Helen Tapper, Jim Nania and FIS CEO Iain McIlwee

See full details of all the winning entries here: www.thefis.org/2021/11/05/fis-awards-industries-best

Awards sponsors

Project of the Year – sponsored by Minster



Interior Fit-Out – sponsored by SIG



Drywall Residential – sponsored by British Gypsum



Drywall Commercial – sponsored by CCF



Partitioning – sponsored by Protektor



Ceilings – sponsored by Zentia



Plastering – sponsored by Nevill Long



SFS – sponsored by Troax



THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION IS BRIGHT WITH THIS TALENTED TRAINEE WORKFORCE

SkillBuild, delivered by CITB, is the largest multi-trade competition in the UK for construction trainees and apprentices.



A SERIES of competitions sees the very best compete against each other to be crowned a winner in their chosen trade. As each level of competition progresses, competitors are tested not only on their technical abilities, but on their time management, character and commitment, and the competitions can help them build their own confidence, self-esteem and life skills.

The Regional Qualifiers run UK-wide, from April to June each year. These one-day events bring together apprentices and trainees, with the overall eight highest-scoring competitors in each specialist skill going through to the next round – the SkillBuild UK National Final.

The skill levels increase and the pressure intensifies as competitors from across the UK are brought together for a three-day event, as part of WorldSkills UK 'LIVE'. The highest-scoring eligible recipients have the potential to join the WorldSkills UK 'Squad UK' and progress to international competition.

SkillBuild UK National Final

The SkillBuild 2021 National Finals were held at the National Construction College (East) site in Bircham Newton, Norfolk over the course of three days, from Tuesday 16 November to Thursday 18 November.

This year's qualifying rounds were unlike any other – due to Covid restrictions, online assessments and remotely-delivered physical tasks were introduced, and were met with an incredible response from competitors, who stepped up to the challenge of a new way of competing.

Almost 250 competitors participated in the qualifiers across a range of skill disciplines, showing judges the very best of what construction apprentices and trainees have to offer at locations up and down the UK.

Success for fit-out sector

The six finalists in the plastering and drywall systems category were, Liam Watson, Matthew Connolly and Ignas Kurasovas (all from Errigal Contracts) Tommy Falco, West London College (Employed by K10



Gold medal winner,
Ignas Kurasovas



Silver medal winner,
Liam Watson



Bronze medal winner,
Matthew Connolly

and working for BDL Group); Zara Dupont, Leeds College of Building (trainee) and Billy Messent, Preston College (working for Fullwood Plastering Services).

FIS member, Errigal Contracts knocked it out of the park by winning all top three medals:

- Gold medal winner: Ignas Kurasovas – Errigal Contracts
- Silver medal winner: Liam Watson – Errigal Contracts
- Bronze medal winner: Matthew Connolly – Errigal Contracts

Commenting on this outstanding result, George Swann, FIS Skills and Training Lead, said: "To have five of the six National SkillBuild finalists from FIS member organisations is testament to the quality of workmanship being achieved in plastering and drywall by our members. Medal winners, Ignas Kurasovas, Liam Watson and Matthew Connolly from Errigal Contracts, now have an opportunity to represent the UK at the EuroSkills competition in St Petersburg in 2022. Everyone at FIS applauds Errigal Contracts on this outstanding achievement."

Damien Treanor, one of the founders of Errigal Contracts, said: "This is a really important journey for the drywall industry and I am so proud of all our dedicated team members who go above and beyond for all our apprentices and for Errigal.

"To achieve the top three medals in the UK when all these people are from Ireland really encourages our industry in the rest of the UK to step up and get ready for the years ahead.

"These young people worked on their build for three days under watchful eyes of the judges, I am very impressed and I feel proud to be part of their journey wherever it takes them."

There are nine construction categories at SkillBuild and the ones that will be of most interest to FIS members are: carpentry, furniture and cabinet making, joinery, painting and decorating, plastering, plastering and drywall systems and wall and floor tiling. (The other two categories are bricklaying and stonemasonry.)

www.goconstruct.org/skillbuild

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DESIGN IN DESIGN AND BUILD SUBCONTRACTS

This article examines responsibility for design typically found in design and build subcontracts for steel framing systems (SFS) and, indeed, more generally in the fit-out and interiors sector, the role of collateral warranties and related issues of professional indemnity (PI) insurance cover and limitations on liability.

UNDER a design and build project, the main contractor is fully responsible for all aspects of design undertaken by them, including by their supply chain. The extent of all design obligations and responsibilities in turn passed on by the main contractor to a subcontractor will be set out in the specification and all other documents incorporated into the subcontract, as well as terms of the subcontract itself.

Manufacturers of products (either with or without design responsibility) also commonly form a further link in this chain. Even if the subcontractor places an order of SFS or other products by way of purchase order only, that purchase amounts to a contract into which, in absence of equivalent express terms agreed, will be implied minimum terms that the goods are of reasonable quality, reasonably fit for purpose and that the manufacturer has used reasonable skill and care in carrying out any design.

Any breach of these or other contractually agreed standards will mean that the subcontractor has a claim against the manufacturer to recover any losses ultimately recoverable by the main contractor that can be shown to result from that breach.

Fully understand the contract

It is therefore vital for subcontractors and manufacturers to fully review, understand and price these obligations, and make sure they are achievable before entering into contract. If the subcontractor is responsible for delayed or defective design, upon the contractor receiving a claim from their end client for recovery of loss incurred in consequence (e.g. liquidated damages for project delay), the contractor will subsequently issue their own claim against the subcontractor/manufacturer for recovery

of their loss, including that which they are ultimately responsible to the end client for.

As a result, it is of fundamental importance that subcontractors and manufacturers not only understand their respective design responsibilities but also ensure that they have appropriate PI insurance in place, to help meet and cover possible liability for loss caused due to negligent design errors or omissions (e.g. remedial costs, delay damages).

Avoid taking on any uninsured liabilities.

PI cover does not apply to claims for loss due to defective installation or other poor workmanship. It is common for subcontracts and agreements with manufacturers to incorporate minimum requirements for amount of PI cover to be maintained and for how long. It is essential that the contract requirements are consistent with the actual terms of insurance cover available, particularly in the context of the recent hardening of the PI market, with, for example, consequent reduction in availability of cover on an each and every claim basis in favour of an aggregate claims basis. It is important to avoid taking on any uninsured liabilities.

It is worth noting the increasing prevalence of collateral warranties or equivalent grant of what are known as 'Third Party Rights' (TPR) being required of SFS and other specialist design subcontractors. These have the effect of extending design and all other obligations, for example, owed by a subcontractor under a subcontract, to an additional third party, typically the end client, a fund or subsequent purchaser or tenant of the property. The purpose of these documents is to reduce risk of intervening insolvency of the main contractor, and which would otherwise prevent the beneficiary under the collateral warranty



David Rintoul, Partner
at Hill Dickinson LLP

William Hodges,
Associate at
Hill Dickinson LLP

from recovering loss due to negligent design, by providing a direct contractual relationship where none would otherwise exist. Given therefore the additional obligations owed by these warranties, it is important to try to limit the numbers agreed to be entered into and price for their provision.

Agree limits to liability

The final important principle to bear in mind when it comes to design liability is to always seek to agree limits to that liability, both in the sub-contract or other agreement and any collateral warranty/TPR agreement. This can be done by any one or more of a combination of:

- an overall cap on liability at an agreed level; and/or
- a net contribution clause, by which recoverable loss is limited to that element of loss for which a sub-contractor/manufacturer is solely responsible for, if an amount of loss is caused or contributed to by more than one party; and/or
- exclusion of liability for certain categories of loss, commonly indirect or consequential loss.

www.hilldickinson.com

SUSTAINABLE INTERIOR DESIGN

Dr Vanessa Brady OBE, Founder and CEO of the Society of British and International Interior Design (SBID), considers how the COP26 aims to achieve zero carbon by 2050 impacts the interior design industry, and what key factors interior designers or specifiers should consider to reduce the carbon footprint of their designs.

See a time in the future when the key considerations for property buyers and commercial tenants are not just location, but include a building's carbon footprint. Across the construction and furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) sectors, the A&D industry contributes greatly to the world's carbon emissions. For interior designers, our impact on the environment must consider the whole lifecycle of the product or materials we specify, from the harvesting, processing and manufacturing, to the transportation, use and final installation.

We are seeing more and more designers specialise in sustainable interiors in the same way that designers specialise in residential, commercial or hospitality design. No matter the specialism, all designers and specifiers have the power to make design decisions that help to minimise carbon and reduce waste, whether that is utilising solutions that improve the energy efficiency of properties or specifying ecological, carbon-absorbing paint for example.

Incorporating sustainable practices into supply chains

Throughout the course of a building's lifespan, interior renovations (especially in the commercial sense) can accumulate larger carbon footprints than the building itself. Interior designers are the visionaries and product specifiers of a scheme, so it's important that we educate clients to make

better choices and influence the final design to reuse or upcycle existing products and materials where possible, as well as identify new innovations in technology which improve product performance. Cradle-to-cradle and cradle-to-grave initiatives are an important step in specifying products that actively aim to reduce environmental impacts. It's also important to consider the types of materials we select, both natural and manmade, for the impacts they engender – from the origin and resources required for production, to the durability, maintenance and end-of-life disposal.

Improving ethical and environmental impacts throughout procurement

We are not aligned as an industry. The entire design, product and installation sectors are segmented with little correlation and conversation between them. Yet, each sector needs the other two. Until we communicate and share the issues that each sector causes to the others, we can't eradicate them – and that must end. I have always felt that a designer's project is a prototype and so inherently, it is open to generating errors in procurement. It's imperative that we share these errors to prevent a repeat process or unnecessary waste. This way we can create an efficient and joined-up industry, which operates under a shared system of mutual values and professional standards.



Dr Vanessa Brady OBE

I have built, owned and managed my own fit-out company for many years, because I simply could not co-ordinate trades, compatibility of materials and fixtures with the budget and approved design – unless we effectively embraced conversation as project partners and co-operated on solutions to the problems that we all know still exist. By collaborating across the industry, we will drive positive and improved outcomes. For this reason, SBID encourages greater partnership between interior designers, product suppliers and fit-out specialists.

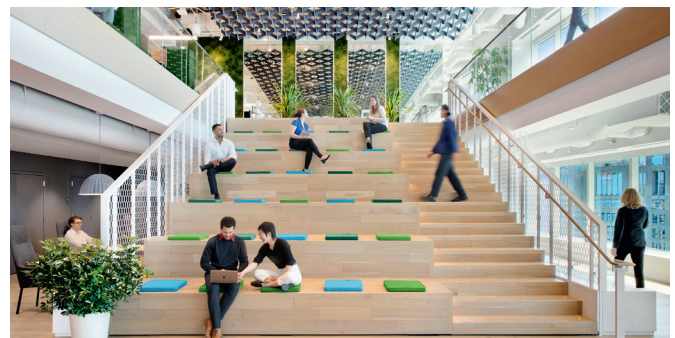
So often, compliant products are installed in an unsuitable location so the products fail in their performance. I'm very keen for the SBID Construction Council, consisting of contractors, construction experts and consultants, to co-operate with other industry bodies, and as a party to the Government's Construction Leadership Council, we look forward to supporting this three-way collaboration. It's now time to build on our strengths and restart the conversation with all industry counterparts to create greener environments for future generations.

www.sbid.org

FIS and SBID have recently set down a Memorandum of Understanding to work more closely to encourage closer working between the design and contracting communities.



SBID Awards 2021 Finalist, Fogarty Finger, The Dime



SBID Awards 2021 Finalist, Elkus Manfredi Architects, CBRE

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CONSTRUCTION'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



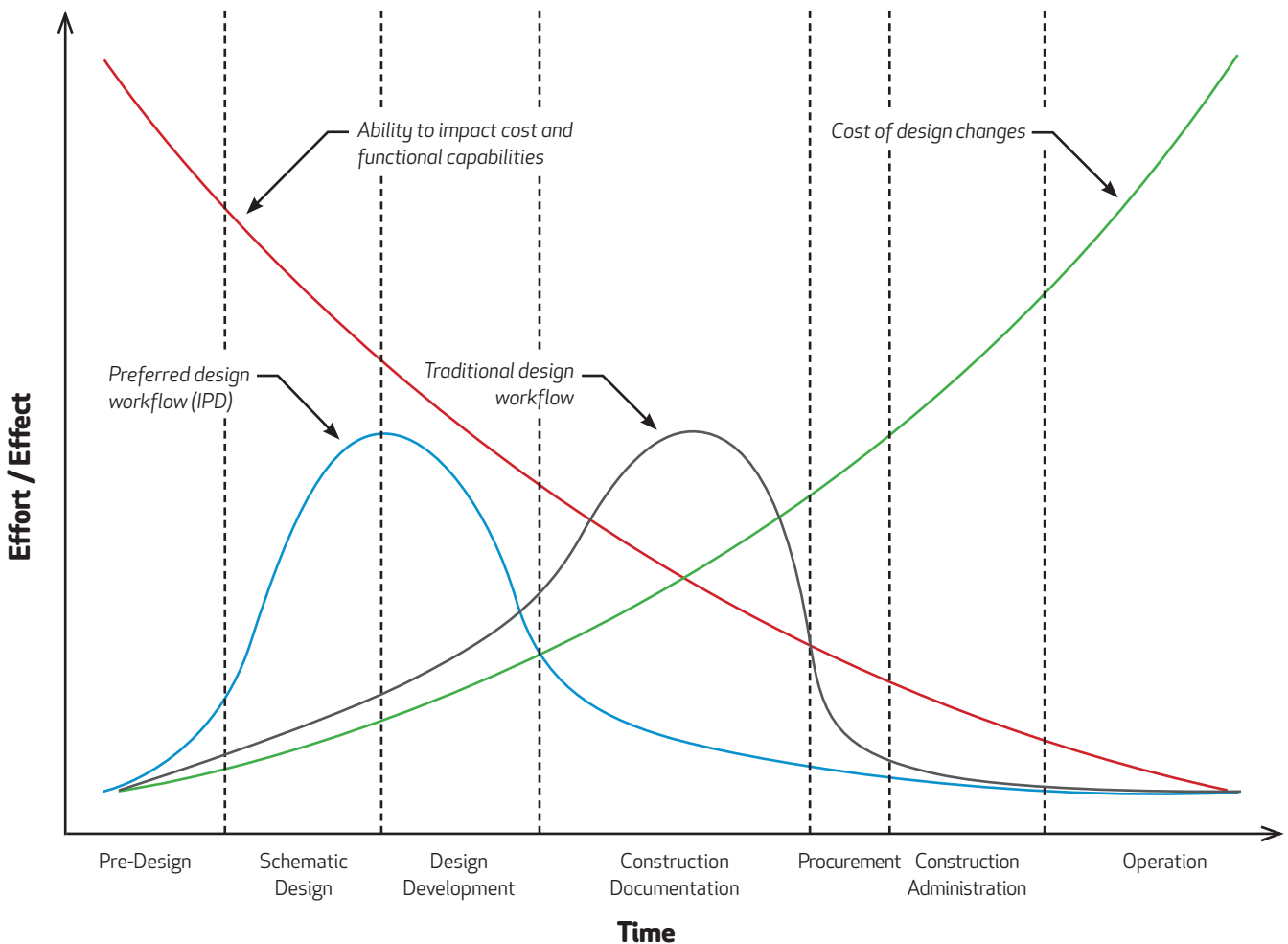
Due to political, social, technological and environmental requirements, building designs are becoming more complex. Consequently, the need to change how construction is managed, delivered and operated also has to evolve.

Over the years, the construction industry has been moving away from the traditional ways of working and towards a digital future for information management. After all, project designs or redesigns should take place on a computer screen, not on the construction site.

The ISO 19650 standard is an international standard for managing information over the whole lifecycle of a built asset using building information modelling (BIM). It contains all the same principles and high-level requirements as UK BIM Framework and is closely aligned

with the current UK 1192 standards. There is increasing demand among principal contractors and architects for BS EN ISO 19650 certification and the perceptions around BIM are changing. FIS member, Komfort, UK manufacturer of partitioning systems, specialist glazing and

The MacLeamy Curve



doors, recognised the pressing need for change and is one of the first manufacturers to embark on the journey with the British Standards Institution (BSi) and they achieved the BS EN ISO 19650 standard last summer.

The need for change

The construction planning process is considered the most substantial part of construction management. Yet, according to the NBS Report 2020 (www.thenbs.com/knowledge/national-bim-report-2020), many companies continue to work using traditional methods of managing and creating information and appear reluctant to change.

While construction companies continue to make themselves aware of BIM and its capabilities, the NBS report suggests that the main reasons for resisting change include:

- low client demand;
- lack of in-house expertise;
- insufficient training; and
- cost.

The MacLeamy Curve (left) illustrates the escalating cost of design modifications as a project team progresses in the design process. Clearly, the cost of any changes can be minimised by signing off the design prior to the development of construction documentation and the procurement of goods and services. Any changes to the design during the creation of construction documents and procurement will add additional costs and time to the project.

It is important to note that when using traditional methods of working, the information created may not be safe and secure. Electronic systems and memory devices on computers can be used for storing and transferring information, but this can become corrupted or even lost. Companies that continue to work using outdated technology risk losing out on the benefits that BIM can offer and in the complex and fast-paced world of construction, we need a more flexible, digital solution to manage and control secure information.

Working to an efficient model

BIM is the management of information through the whole lifecycle of a built asset, from initial design all the way through to construction, maintaining and finally de-commissioning, through the use of digital modelling. It's all about collaboration between engineers, owners, architects and contractors in a three dimensional, virtual construction environment (common data

environment), and it shares information across these disciplines.

BIM allows design and construction teams to communicate about design and coordinate information across different levels that has been unseen before. This information remains with the project, from before beginning construction, right throughout its lifetime. It also helps to analyse any potential impacts.

For Komfort, the BIM and BS EN ISO 19650 benefits include:

- 3D modelling to provide visualisation and simulation;
- collaborative working results in a reduction in time and costs for Komfort and its clients;
- faster release of information around tenders and designs;
- collaborative working improves the quality of the finished project;
- new technology hosts all information in one location;
- all project information remains accurate, up-to-date and is available to all project stakeholders; and
- an improved customer experience.

The collaborative approach

Moving into a digital world, effective collaborative working is essential if design and construction teams are to cover the entire lifecycle of a construction product, including all its maintenance and decommissioning.

Traditionally, collaboration has been limited as forms of contracts have been specific in the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders within the project and, therefore, contractors risk being blamed for events outside of their works, even if the works are indirectly linked.

Four factors that drive collaborative behaviour are:

- trust and respect;
- openness and clear communication;
- common goals and new ways of working; and
- leadership and interpersonal skills – including the awareness and needs of other professionals.

Through collaborative working, everyone involved in a project can easily and speedily share ideas, perceptions and interpretations. This was seen on a recent project where Komfort collaborated in the design of curtain walling with the architect and principal contractors. The results ensured that the preceding and follow-on trades were able to complete their works without clashing. There was no snagging identified upon completion, quality was to the highest standard and no additional costs or delays to the programme were incurred.



BIM Toolbox

FIS has produced a BIM Toolbox, with funding from CITB, to raise awareness among specialist contractors on the processes required to work using BIM. www.thefis.org/membership-hub/publications/bim-toolbox

Without collaborative working, we will continue to waste time and money by having to make corrections to unstructured information and incorrect management of information by untrained personnel.

The BS EN ISO 19650 standard requires manufacturers to produce information through a collaborative way of working. To accomplish this, Komfort has introduced new processes and technology and changed their teams' ways of working.

Teams need to fully realise that a forward-thinking mindset is just as important as the technologies and processes behind it. By adopting these changes, Komfort's efficiencies provide a greater customer experience by meeting project objectives, on time, on programme and to budget.

Adapt and evolve

The BS EN ISO 19650 standard will change the way we move and manage information. Being an early adopter allows Komfort to align with the future of construction by encouraging collaboration, trust, quality of information and getting it right the first time.

There is a rapidly increasing demand for this digital transformation and it will involve the whole supply chain. These processes and implementations made across the business will streamline the tender process and ensure a smooth transition with information in one proactive environment.

www.komfort.com

INNOVATIONS

Ours is a fast-paced industry, matched only by the lightning speed of innovation in its products and ways of designing and installing them. In this article, we bring you some fascinating, innovative projects and some predictions for this year. We also explain how technical knowledge made available to all on site helps to bring about more collaborative working relationships.

In the UK Government's Build Back Better plan, emphasis is placed on supporting companies and suppliers to collaborate and innovate in order to find solutions which are more sustainable, effective and create greater long-term value. For many companies, deciphering the point at which normal day-to-day problem-solving becomes innovation can be tricky as it's often the case that only a small part of a large project can be termed 'innovation'.

1. Indeglås project: Advanced Research Centre for University of Glasgow

Indeglås has been working on the £113m new build Advanced Research Centre for University of Glasgow project in partnership with principal contractor, Multiplex. This project provides a perfect example of Indeglås' collaborative and innovative ethos and demonstrates the direct and indirect benefits gained from the way they approach each and every brief they develop with their clients. Jeanette MacIntyre, Indeglås, Managing Director, explains more:

Using carefully researched design methodology, we identified three key areas within the design and installation of the

internal atrium glazing work package, which required an innovative approach. With an exceptionally tight timeframe we created a team of qualified advisors including specialist engineers, suppliers and lifting equipment technicians, and embarked on a journey of 'what if' scenarios in order to provide a solution which was not only thought through in terms of structural integrity, fall from height safety and acoustic performance, but also because the glazing needed to be fitted to its own dedicated support frame system off the edge of the concrete slab with a floor to floor height of 4,400mm.

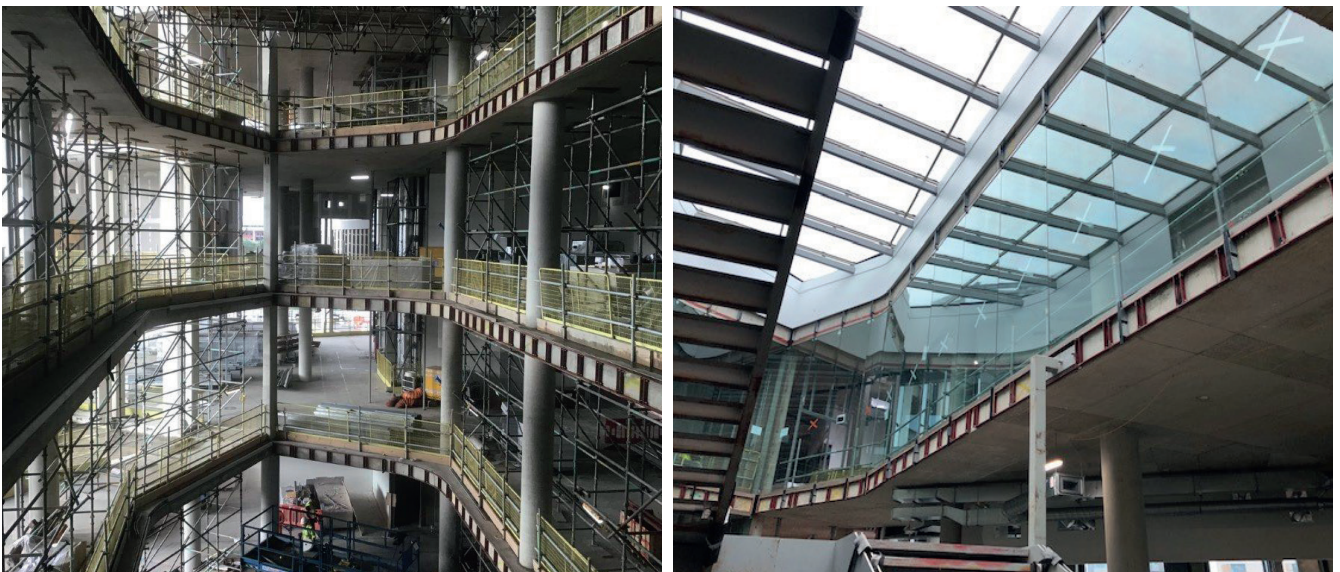
Three separate innovation journeys resulted in bespoke solutions for the modular steel supports, the specification and manufacture and delivery process for the glass panels and the installation process of the glass.

The modular steel support frame was manufactured off-site to ensure accuracy and installed on the slab edge using advanced laser technology to achieve a tolerance of +/- 1 mm on all four levels. This level of accuracy enabled the glass panels to be lifted to the floors individually using two specially adapted cranes and

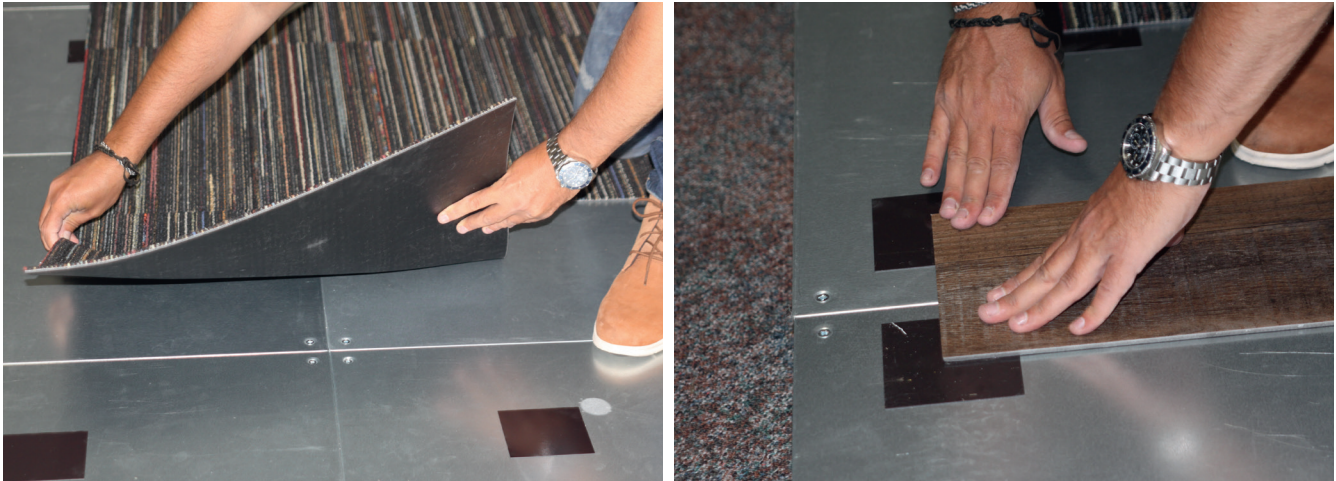
manoeuvred horizontally into place. In order to achieve the high level of performance criteria required of the glass, including taking account the risk of explosion from both sides and internal wind pressure, it was necessary to adopt an SentryGlas Plus (SGP) interlayer to provide the required integrity and strength.

As with many innovative journeys there can be beneficial outcomes which are often hard to determine at the outset and the project at the Advance Research Centre was no exception. Here are some of the 'wins' which came as a result of thinking outside the box:

- we incorporated a complete change in methodology of install without affecting the programme;
- an impressive training certification portfolio upgraded skills for management, operatives and logistics staff;
- the circular economy benefited – all staff and glass supply (the major supply component) came from a supply chain within a five mile radius of the project;
- two labourers employed from within a 10 miles radius are both now fully qualified logistics wardens;



The Indeglås project at the Advanced Research Centre for University of Glasgow



Flooring technology experts, IOBAC UK Ltd are highlighting the crucial role that adhesive-free flooring installation can play in improving the circularity of commercial interior projects with the launch of their MT4+ MagTabs.

- the atrium glass installation programme was reduced by a few weeks;
- there was shared risk and reward on crane hire;
- the collaborative partnership established with a new customer, Multiplex, led to a further contract award; and
- 'visual delight' was achieved – a term used by the daylight engineers to describe an interior which facilitates constant interaction with the variances of natural light. This enhances human performance levels – and provides legacy for staff for the life-cycle of the building.

Imperative to the success of innovation within the built environment is the creation of right environment by the principal contractor and, in this instance, we had the team at Multiplex to thank for bringing their expertise, support, openness and collaborative approach throughout the design phase and beyond. The resulting interior is testament to the partnership formed between our companies and the team at Indeglas are excited to progress with them onto the next new campus building which will provide a home for the Institute of Health and Wellbeing.

www.indeglass.co.uk

2. Innovative adhesive-free flooring

Flooring technology experts, IOBAC UK Ltd are highlighting the crucial role that adhesive-free flooring installation can play in improving the circularity of commercial interior projects with the launch of their MT4+ MagTabs.

Ian Spreadborough, Co-founder and Director of IOBAC, explains: The floor covering is a major part of the specification process but the decision of how it is fixed to the subfloor often left to contractors.

They may decide on traditional adhesive-based methods such as tackifiers, spray and contact adhesives.

However, when that flooring is lifted, it's likely to be contaminated by adhesive residue and some of the subfloor, meaning it's not suitable for recovery or reuse and can't be easily recycled. The subfloor is also contaminated and has to be made good before the next installation, adding remedial costs for landlords and tenants.'

IOBAC's innovative MagTabs are little squares, magnetic on one side and self-adhesive on the other, used to install a variety of floor coverings onto magnetically receptive bases such as metal raised access flooring, whilst ensuring no contamination of the subfloor or flooring product used.

The tiles are locked together horizontally as conventional floating floor solutions, but MagTabs also enable a strong grip in the vertical direction, ensuring tiles are secured well in place until the time comes to lift them. The tabs incorporate IOBAC's Dual Grip technology which combines dry-tack adhesion with magnetism for phenomenal grab, even in high footfall areas.

Ian said: "This gives flooring the ability to adapt quickly to today's flexible space requirement. The installation method has financial benefits too, with labour and material costs significantly reduced during both installation and maintenance, no remedial costs, and no need to purchase new flooring as materials can be reused multiple times.

"Adhesive-free installation represents a different and innovative way to think about flooring – it helps transform it from a single-use material to a flexible design element that can be re-used and re-purposed multiple times before eventually being recycled.

www.iobac.com/adhesive-free-flooring

3. QR Codes

Partitions and ceilings specialists, Platt & Reilly, are creating their own QR codes on site to help make information as accessible as possible. From construction drawings to data sheets and information manuals, a quick scan of the QR code from any tablet or smart phone brings the relevant information up instantly.

www.plattreilly.co.uk

4. Continuing digital innovation

The past year saw many challenges and changes in the construction industry; from supply chain and margin pressures through to the pressure to do more with less. The push toward digitalisation is gathering pace and an increased number of contractors are making digital 'business as usual'.

Tom Noctor, Team Lead and Strategic Product Consultant at Procore, said: "I believe we are going to see progress in two key areas. One is companies placing renewed emphasis on reducing the friction of data entry through easy-to-use software and visual capture technology. The second is a focus on the quality of data. We all know about the principle of 'garbage in, garbage out' the more data you have coming in and the higher quality that data is, the better your business decision-making is going to be. This will become increasingly important as construction businesses are asked to bring new data initiatives onstream, such as whole lifecycle carbon analysis.

"Digital is no longer the job of a single person or a single department, but must be embedded across the organisation — from site to office, from exec to information management to project team level, and between owner, main contractor and subcontractor. A platform approach which prioritises a common user interface and connects stakeholders, processes and their data is the clear route towards achieving this."

www.procore.com



Style's Variflex partition at The Londoner

5. Multiple moveable walls for 'super boutique hotel'

Innovative multipurpose solutions add value to venues by expanding the capabilities of available space. Flexible configurations in key areas enable venues to offer visitors and clients increased options when it comes to events.

The 16 storey 'Londoner', in the south-west corner of Leicester Square, is the world's first 'super boutique hotel'. UK partitioning specialists, Style, installed a six metre high Skyfold vertical-rising moveable wall in the main ballroom, as well as a combination of Dorma Hüppe Variflex sliding walls and smaller Skyfold systems throughout the numerous event areas, giving the hotel multiple options for opening out or dividing the available areas and maximising room hire revenue.

Style, worked closely with architect Woods Bagot, interior designer Yabu Pushelberg, and contractors Blue Sky Building & EE Smith Contracts, to deliver innovative and flexible event space throughout the hotel.

Allowing two events to run concurrently, the main ballroom, that can hold up to 850 guests, is divided by a fully automatic Skyfold moveable wall. Discreetly housed in the ceiling cavity, the wall descends into place at the push of a button and, with a 59dB Rw acoustic rating, lively gatherings can take place either side of the wall undisturbed.

www.style-partitions.co.uk

6. British Gypsum supports the industry in building better

British Gypsum has launched its new website to provide better data, tools and support for its customers, helping to raise building standards across the industry and facilitate better building outcomes.

In order to ensure that it provides users with access to the most accurate and up-to-date tested product and specification information, the new website is fed by a Product Information Management (PIM) system, which provides all the performance data on British Gypsum's drylining products, systems and specifications from a single source. This is in line with the Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI), giving customers confidence in the accuracy of product information, making it easier to specify systems and products.

The new website will automatically serve EN, rather than BS standards across the site, meaning that all product performance data provided has been tested to the more rigorous EN standards. While the White Book Specification Selector will now be prioritising EN standards going forwards, British Gypsum's bank of BS standards data will still be available on the website for customers specifying to the latter.

As part of British Gypsum's commitment to providing its partner construction customers with complete transparency and all the information required to support the 'golden thread', the new website has a dedicated project area which allows users to set up separate 'projects' and gain access to additional documents including test reports and BIM files.

www.british-gypsum.com/certainty

7. Industry first for fire integrity and installation

Profab Access has launched a revolutionary certified frame system that sets a new standard for innovation, fire performance and functionality, making installation on site safer, faster and simpler.

The PRECISION adjustable frame can be adjusted to meet the specific dimensions of each structural opening, ensuring the installation is fit-for-purpose by providing the highest standards in accuracy, and removing the requirement for plastic packers. It is constructed with an all-in-one smoke, intumescent and acoustic FS1000 seal, eliminating the need for additional intumescent mastic when installing the frame into a flexible or solid wall construction. This cost-efficient and sustainable material contains no halogen compounds and will not emit toxic gas when heated, ensuring the safety of building occupants in the event of a fire. (See more on page 7).

www.profabaccess.com



FIND OUT MORE

For more innovative projects, visit the searchable FIS project library at www.thefis.org/project-library



Six raw recruits join Zentia's new apprenticeship programme

Ceiling systems manufacturer, Zentia, has launched a formal apprenticeship programme at its two factories in the UK.

The company has taken on six recruits in a variety of roles for its ceiling tiles and grid/suspension system factories in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear. They include a laboratory technician, two process operators, a manufacturing engineer, HR administrator and HSE technician, some of whom are combining on-the-job training with a day a week at college, over 18 to 42 months.

Zentia already employs seven former apprentices from as long ago as the 1990s in roles ranging from engineering supervisor,

project engineer, process improvement engineer and junior control systems engineer to shift maintenance technician.

Zentia's Head of HR Nicky Gallagher explained that the company had historically had a level of success in recruiting mechanical and electrical apprentices and seeing their careers develop as they moved on into permanent roles. But these opportunities had been on an ad-hoc, sporadic basis rather than in set numbers or annually. She said: "As we look to further grow our business, people development is high on our agenda and apprenticeships form part of this activity. I'm delighted we now have the opportunity

to launch the Zentia Apprenticeship Programme, and our plan is to recruit further apprentices each year."



Former and current Zentia apprentices

Addressing the "lack of carbon understanding" in industry

James Latham has released a carbon calculator designed to direct customers towards more sustainable products.

Built in partnership with the BioComposites Department at the University of Bangor, it is based upon detailed research into the embodied and biogenic carbon impacts of the products that they supply. The calculator covers just over 70% of the total Lathams range and focuses on timber products.

Ewa Bazydło, Environmental Manager at Lathams, said: "Reducing the environmental

impact of our buildings is one of the key issues of our time. However, the understanding around sustainability is not consistent across the industry.

"We've developed the calculator to help our customers to better understand the sustainability of the materials they choose as well as the expected performance levels that they offer"

The tool calculates environmental impact by looking at the carbon footprint of products, from production through to delivery to Lathams depots. It also looks at how much carbon is stored within the wood's structure, known as biogenic carbon.

James Latham strengthen position in Northern Ireland

Timber and materials supplier, James Latham, has strengthened its position in Northern Ireland with the acquisition of IJK Timber Group Ltd, a division of Sarcon (No155) Limited trading as IJK Timber and Northern Hardwood.

While the companies have now become part of the Latham Group, they will continue to trade with no disruption to regular service. Former owners and Directors of the company, Graham Knox and Peter Elwood, will continue to run the business as part of the Latham management team.

This strategic acquisition for James Latham strengthens its business footing in the region with an experienced team to provide an excellent ex-stock service from stocks held in Northern Ireland

Find out more at: www.lathamtimber.co.uk/carbon-calculator

STOP PRESS!

James Latham supplied more than £300k of machined and engineered Florian European Oak for the Magdalene College Library project, which went on to win the overall Gold winning project at the 2021 TRADA Wood Awards. The company went on to win in two categories at the British Woodworking Federation Awards in November for their recently developed Finish Line Cladding Collection.

www.lathamtimber.co.uk



Magdalene College Library



aask us VIP lounge at Workspace Design Show



Delegates' lounge, by aask us, at last year's Workspace Design Show

aask us, manufactured and installed a show stopping delegates' lounge at last year's Workspace Design Show.

Developed by Creative Director at Rainlight, Yorgo Lykouria, the lounge featured unique metal mesh partitioning, which creates a contemporary, industrial

space that encourages flexible working.

Anthony Chadley, MD at aask us, said: "We're thrilled to have collaborated with Yorgo to create a unique space that successfully illustrates the shift towards hybrid working"

www.aask.us

Minster bolsters fire protection proposition



Carrie Blackshaw, Minster's Fire Protection Sales Director

Minster has appointed one of the industry's key fire protection specialists, Carrie Blackshaw, as Fire Protection Sales Director. Carrie will focus on driving Minster's fire protection product proposition, heightening its solutions offering and bringing her knowledge and expertise to develop the capabilities of the entire Minster team.

Reece Bailes, Sales Director, Minster said: "Carrie's knowledge and experience in this area is vast, having spent the last 15 years at Rockwool, and will undoubtedly enhance the solutions and product proposition we can provide."

Accordial announce new strategic global alliance

A new alliance has been formed between UK manufacturer of acoustic moveable walls and partitions, Accordial Ltd, and Hufcor Inc, a global industry leader and preferred partner for the most installed brand of operable partitions in the world.

The new partnership will see Accordial's 59 dB acoustic rated PremierWall system launched via Hufcor's global distribution network in Europe and other markets where top range acoustical performance is required. PremierWall is a rapid action, top hung acoustic movable and retractable wall system designed for ease, efficiency, and reliable daily use. The welded steel panel construction and top and bottom retractable seal systems are synergistic with other Hufcor global products.

In the UK market, Accordial will become a master distributor for Hufcor movable glass walls, US produced Summit vertical lift and Hufcor track systems. Hufcor's glass wall systems are suitable for a wide range of applications including acoustic partitioning, switch glass daylighting or frameless solutions designed to meet the client's design requirements with clear view and designer aesthetics.

UK based Accordial Ltd, part of the Ash & Lacy Group, have been supplying and manufacturing acoustic movable walls and sliding folding partitions for more than 25 years.

www.accordial.co.uk

Martin Vella celebrates 30 years as a Director at Pexhurst

Martin Vella has spent three decades with Pexhurst, joining as a Contracts Manager back in 1991. By 2003, he had worked his way up to become Managing Director.

He said: "I came into Pexhurst in a deep recession in 1991 and the focus then was survival. As we got through that period, we then started to invest in growth and bring in key team members that are still with us today.

"Being at the helm of an SME company still excites me and I want to see Pexhurst continue to be a market leader in our sector, with careful organic growth and staff investment. I'm a strong believer that if you get those foundations right, the rest will follow.

"Over the next 30 years, I want to see the company continue to grow and deliver projects successfully. We are investing in the next generation and would like to see some of these grow into roles that the current Directors hold, then I will know that we have done a great job in safeguarding Pexhurst as we approach a centenary!"

Read Martin's full interview at www.specfinish.co.uk/martin-vella-celebrates-30-years-as-a-director-at-pexhurst





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- eliminates the need for intumescent mastic
- increases speed of installation
- ensures compliance of the entire installation
- removes potential margins for error

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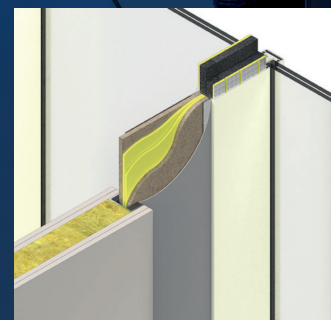
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Siderise have over 45 years' experience in designing, developing and manufacturing acoustic and fire insulation solutions for building interiors.

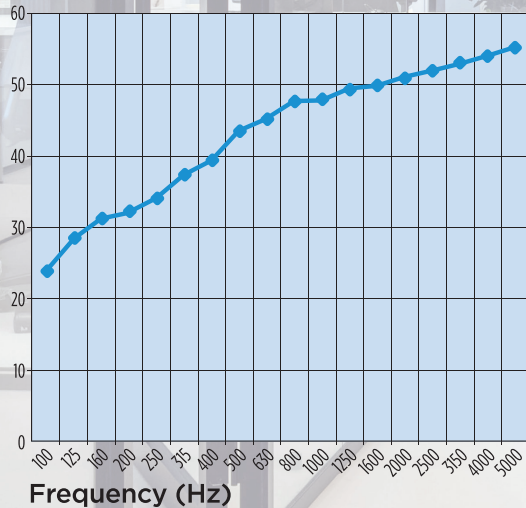
The Siderise FIP high-performance acoustic panel, which is a thin multi-layered board offering exceptional sound transmission performance and has been specifically developed to provide a solution where an internal partition abuts a curtain wall or window mullion.

Due to the 46dB Rw performance at only 31mm thickness, the Siderise FIP high-performance acoustic panel can also be used in many other conditions which demand the combination of a high SRI performance with a minimal thickness.



SIDERISE® FIP

SRI (dB)



Find out more: www.siderise.com/products/interiors

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