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# SPEC FINISH

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The magazine of FIS  
representing the finishes  
and interiors sector

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## CHANGING THE FACE OF THE FIT-OUT SECTOR

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Mentoring small  
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### Technical:

An exclusive preview:  
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### Feature:

Drylining:  
Milestones and  
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# THE EXTRAORDINARY TALE OF THE DISAPPEARING DESIGN RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

The RIBA Plan of Work is “the definitive model for the design and construction process of buildings” and sits at the heart of the construction process. The Design Responsibility Matrix (DRM) is a core pillar in the Plan of Works, but a clear Matrix is not always shared and references to it vanish when we get to the contract and regulated documents. Does this need to change to avoid confusion, better support the Design Process and help Designers to comply with new regulatory requirements?



I had the opportunity to attend the big “One Year On” Building Safety Regulator event at the end of May. It was an interesting day exploring how the regulator is shaping up and examining some of the emerging challenges together. Thankfully, there were no new revelations, but it reminded me of the enormity of change. The emphasis right now is on Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs), but this is about wholesale change, building a new culture around duty holders that will transform how we manage the construction process for all buildings. The regulator talked about a decade of change – it is clear we are only at the start of it.

I remain confident that the direction of travel is right. The regulatory lines have been drawn in broadly the right places, but there is still a fair bit of “colouring in” to do. In one of the interactive sessions, when asked to describe the culture in your part of the supply chain, the biggest word to appear on the interactive word cloud was “CONFUSED.” It isn’t surprising that people are feeling confused; a lot is changing all at once, and while the direction of travel is clear, some of the details are not.

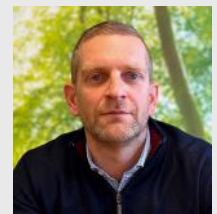
A prime example of this is the role of “Designer,” and I am concerned that the complexity of the design process hasn’t been fully addressed (see the excellent article by Damian James, “Everybody is a Specifier ‘til They Are Punched in the Face,” which discusses some of the challenges in the April issue of SpecFinish). For HRBs, the

duty holders will need to evidence how they fulfil the Competence General Requirement, ie, they are competent to fulfil the duties of a contractor or designer. How do you evidence competence if the design process itself isn’t clear?

If we start with the RIBA Plan of Work (PoW), it recognises that “*the interface between the design team and the construction team has also become more complex as aspects of building design are increasingly being carried out by specialist subcontractors.*” The PoW leans heavily on the Design Responsibility Matrix (DRM), recognising: “*It is crucial to review the responsibility matrix before Stage 4 commences so it is clear who will be producing the Manufacturing Information and Construction Information, and whether the design team will produce Prescriptive Information or Descriptive Information.*”

I was reflecting on this and the challenges outlined in Damian’s article while listening to the debate, and the question I keep coming back to is why the DRM isn’t listed as a regulated document at Gateway Two. The Construction Control Plan is explicit, as are the Change Control Process and Mandatory Occurrence Reporting, but design is covered by “*full plans to a scale of not less than 1:1250*” and “*other plans as necessary to show that HRB work complies with all applicable requirements.*” The DRM is like the proverbial Cheshire Cat from *Alice in Wonderland*—if you don’t know

**IAIN MCILWEE**  
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the story, the short version is that the cat appears to remind Alice we are all mad, then grins and disappears!

Beyond this reference in the PoW, the DRM, which promises so much, vanishes and is seldom mentioned formally again—not in the contracts we sign nor in the regulations that guide us. There is an argument that it is implied in the need for design coordination, and I’ve seen a number of valiant attempts to build one. However, I think it would help all parties if the process was better defined and the regulations were made more explicit by referencing this crucial document.

I really can’t think of any good reason why it shouldn’t be included, and I am kicking myself for not flagging this earlier. It is something that we will be following up on with the Regulator, and we will be encouraging everyone in our supply chain who may have design responsibility to request it.

The Cheshire Cat reminds us that life involves walking along strange paths, never quite finding what you’re looking for, it seems at the moment this is a befitting analogy for the Design Development Process!

Welcome

# SPEC FINISH

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Cover image:

Dan Morris, Account Director at CCF, sharing his views with the other participants at the roundtable event.

#### SpecFinish magazine wrapper

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Project of the Year Winner  
Space Interior Systems, HVN, London

# WELCOME

## TO THE JULY ISSUE OF SPECFINISH

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the FIS Contractors Awards Lunch at the stunning Royal Lancaster Hotel in London. However, I have been informed that it was inspiring to witness almost 600 leading figures from the sector come together to celebrate the achievements of the winners. I am sure you all enjoyed a wonderful afternoon. Congratulations to the winners and all those who were shortlisted.

As I created the Awards feature on page 26, I browsed through the images provided of the projects shortlisted for an award. I am consistently struck by their remarkable achievements. The employees who contributed to and completed these projects must feel immense pride, thinking to themselves, "I just did that". It remains crucial that we share this sense of pride and our passion to inspire the next generation of workers to join the fit-out sector. On page 16, you'll find that FIS gathered a diverse group of industry figures, with a mix of specialisms, genders, ethnicities, and ages. Together, they share with us their insight into this very topic, focusing on how we can enhance inclusivity and appeal within the sector.

On page 10, James Parlour, FIS Technical and Vetting Manager, discusses how the risk of inadvertently becoming the manufacturer is greater for a distributor and contractor than they might think, given the shifting legislative landscape.

The disposal of packaging waste poses a challenge to the construction industry relating to the down-cycling of materials, but also through the amplification of carbon emissions from energy expended through chipping, recycling and baling activities. The Pallet LOOP initiative is a smart response to dealing with the significant number of pallets that end up as waste material on construction sites. To read more about this initiative go to page 12.

Please let us know about your projects and company news as we do like to feature members as much as we can. No project too small... [david.crowson@warnersgroup.co.uk](mailto:david.crowson@warnersgroup.co.uk)

[www.thefis.org](http://www.thefis.org)





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Andy is Managing Director at Measom Dryline



**Jim Nania**  
Jim is the Founder of Arden Business Services

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## CAT A fit-outs are two and a half times more carbon intensive than previously thought, research reveals

A study, carried out by architectural practice Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM), challenges the assumptions made in the RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment<sup>1</sup> which has become the industry standard for calculating carbon emissions.

The study reveals that the carbon impact of CAT A fit-out is much higher than previously thought. The research, called Fit-Out Rip Out, found the whole life carbon impacts of CAT A fit-out for a lease of under 10,000sqft over 60 years was up to two and a half times greater than if calculated using the industry standard methodology, the RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment. The research was compiled with input from British Land, Derwent, and The Office Group.

Calculating the true carbon impacts of CAT A fit-out is challenging as the RICS methodology includes two categories, finishes and services that span the base build, such as services distribution in the core, and office fit-out, including items such as on-floor ductwork and fan coil units.

Working out how to allocate the carbon impacts of the base build versus the office fit-out is up to the discretion of individual assessors.

The study looked at four different types of fit-out ranging from substantial to subtle. The substantial fit-out featured high-level air distribution with heating and cooling provided by fan coil units,

sprinklers, and other services hidden by a suspended ceiling incorporating lighting.

The subtle fit-out features natural ventilation with heating and cooling provided by pipes buried in the concrete floor slabs. The former is potentially the most carbon-intensive as most of the services are at risk of being ripped out during a new fit-out whereas much of the services in the subtle fit-out are baked into the building fabric.

The research found that substantial fit-outs in a lease of under 10,000sqft could add up to 470kgCO<sub>2</sub>m<sup>2</sup> over 60 years whereas subtle fit-outs totalled 231kgCO<sub>2</sub>m<sup>2</sup> for the same lease. The carbon impacts of fit-out on larger areas were lower because tenants taking big spaces tend to stay longer in one location.

To read the report in full visit: <https://tinyurl.com/2wtrsmv2>

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

Source

1. <https://tinyurl.com/uewf2t9x>



## Building Safety Act: Is the industry ready?

As the six-month transition period for Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs) came to a close, new research from NBS, shows the industry is still struggling to achieve a consensus on the scope and requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022.

The report reveals half of industry professionals remain unclear on the responsibilities of duty holders for the gateways defined for higher-risk buildings. What's more, only 20 percent

of respondents feel confident they are 'very clear' on the differences in responsibilities, if the project is defined as a higher-risk building.

This is a deeply concerning figure. What the research makes clear, is a greater effort is urgently required to ensure a universal understanding of the BSAs role; particularly, clarifying the lines of responsibility and duties, whilst improving the consistency and quality of

documentation and record keeping on construction projects.

To read the report's findings in full visit: <https://tinyurl.com/54x9zsxp> and said it would be the end of April.

For further clarity on the responsibilities of duty holders then visit: [www.thefis.org/knowledge-hub/technical/fire-protection/building-safety-act](http://www.thefis.org/knowledge-hub/technical/fire-protection/building-safety-act)

[www.thenbs.com](http://www.thenbs.com)

### Clarity about the Building Safety Act

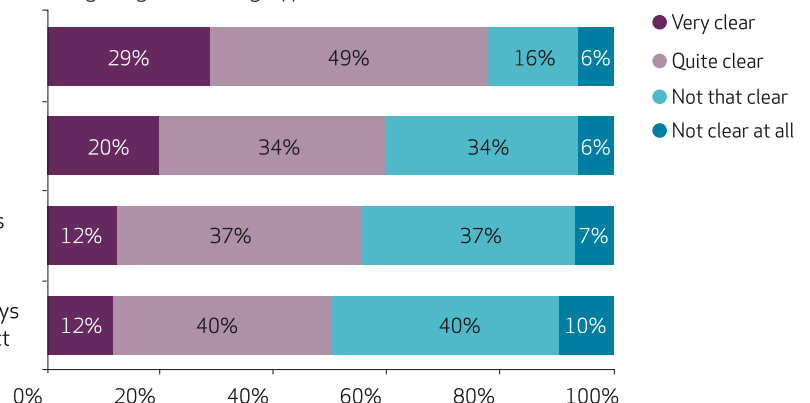
(All those working in England, excluding suppliers)

The types of project that fail within the scope of the Building Safety Act

The differences in responsibilities if the project is defined as a higher-risk building

What you need to do if you carry out a project that falls under the Building Safety Act

The responsibilities of the duty holders for the gateways defined for higher-risk buildings the Building Safety Act



## New CICV YouTube playlist: Effective Contract Management in Construction

CICV has released a new YouTube playlist titled "Effective Contract Management in Construction". This series consists of seven-panel discussion videos derived from the CICV Best Practice Guide, which aims to help Scottish contractors and subcontractors refine their management of building contracts.

### Overview of the playlist:

The videos provide essential strategies for improving payment practices and cash flow,

enhancing cooperation, collaboration, and commitment, and heightening contractual awareness to prevent disputes and improve on-site efficiency. These strategies are illustrated through practical, real-life examples that underscore their relevance and applicability.

The key discussion topics are quality and defects, payment schedules, conflict avoidance strategies, insurance coverage implications, contract amendments, tender qualifications and managing variations.



To watch the panel discussion videos visit:  
[www.youtube.com/@cicvforum5659/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/@cicvforum5659/playlists)

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

## Amendments to Volumes One and Two of Approved Document B

The Government has published a document listing amendments to Volumes One and Two of Approved Document B which will come into effect in September 2026.

These amendments principally concern:

- Threshold for the provision of a second staircase in blocks of flats with a storey 18m or more in height.
- Evacuation shafts are introduced to support the provision of evacuation lifts.
- Changes to provisions for fire doorsets.
- New terminology including definitions for evacuation shaft, evacuation lift lobby, interlocked stair and storey exit.
- Provisions for horizontal escape and vertical escape separated as per the structure of Volume Two.

The 2019 edition incorporating the 2020 and 2022 amendments will continue to apply where a building notice or an initial notice

has been given to, or a building control approval application with full plans made to, the relevant authority before 30 September 2026 and either the building work to which it relates:

1. has started and is sufficiently progressed before that day; or
2. is started and is sufficiently progressed within the period of 18 months beginning on that day.

You can view the amendments by visiting:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-approved-document-b](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-approved-document-b)

FIS will publish further detailed guidance on these changes in the coming months.



## CITB unveils new direction: Investing in the construction skills system

CITB has unveiled its Business Plan for 2024-25. The new direction sets out to build on previous plans and shows how they will support and empower employers by investing £267m over the coming year.

The plan presents a new era for the construction industry by addressing the immediate needs of employers whilst supporting a long-term strategic plan. The 2023 Industry Consultation highlighted three key areas for CITB support – getting more trained people into the industry, the provision of high-quality training, and supporting the ongoing skills development of the existing workforce.

### Nurturing new talent

Construction's 'people pipeline' is critical to future growth for the industry and CITB's plan invests in the need to attract and retain talented individuals. The successful launch

of the New Entrant Support Team (NEST) in 2023-24 will be further expanded to contribute to the 15% increase in the number of new entrants joining the industry. NEST helps employers to better navigate the recruitment process, and access grants and suitable training, when and where they need it.

### A paradigm shift in the skills system

CITB will also focus on developing new Competence Frameworks which will be used to develop qualifications that will support individuals throughout their training to make sure they have the right knowledge, skills, and behaviours to demonstrate safety and expertise in their chosen occupation.

### Training accessible to all

Ensuring training is affordable, high-quality, and crucially accessible to all, is a cornerstone

of the new plan. To achieve this, CITB is expanding its newly introduced Employer Network, rolling it out across Great Britain, to enable local employers to set their funding priorities and meet area-specific skills needs.

### Becoming a beacon training provider

The plan sets out how CITB will invest £30m in the National Construction College (NCC) to support its ambition for the college to become a beacon provider of construction skills training. The money will be invested in the three sites' buildings, infrastructure, and plant, with sustainability at the forefront of these changes.

You can read more about the Business Plan by visiting: [www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/what-we-do/plans-and-performance/business-plan](https://www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/what-we-do/plans-and-performance/business-plan)

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



# SKILLBUILD: RECORD NUMBER OF REGIONAL QUALIFIER COMPETITORS

**Beena Nana**, FIS Head of Skills and Training, discusses attending several amazing SkillBuild showcase events and highlights the significant benefits of the competition for our sector.



Delivered by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), SkillBuild showcases some of the construction industry's brightest talent, as highly skilled trainees and apprentices go head-to-head to be crowned winner of their chosen trade.

The competition offers an opportunity for talented apprentices and learners of all ages to compete regionally against one another in various trade categories.

This year saw a record number of SkillBuild Regional Qualifier competitors' colleges across the UK that hosted the largest and longest-running construction skills competition, with over 1,000 students who will compete in the regional qualifiers this year.

Across ten different trades, bricklaying, carpentry, furniture and cabinet making, joinery, painting and decorating, plastering, drylining (previously plastering and drywall), roof slating and tiling, stonemasonry, and wall and floor tiling competitors are tested on their technical abilities, time management, problem-solving, and skills working under pressure.

Participating in the prestigious competition offers numerous advantages, enhancing both technical expertise and employability skills as well as advancing career options. Other benefits include highlighting employer commitment to raising standards in work-based learning and boosting long-term business performance. For colleges and training providers, success in competitions showcases the quality of their training programs.

There are 19 Regional Qualifiers across the UK from 23 April through 4 July. These one-day events bring together learners who complete a set task relevant to their trade.

Following the Regional Qualifiers, the top eight scoring competitors from each trade category will be invited to take part in the UK National Final. Building on last year's success, the National Final will once again take place at the Marshall Arena in Milton Keynes from 18-22 November.

With an extra 225,000 workers required to meet UK construction demand by 2027, SkillBuild is a fantastic opportunity to promote the diverse range of roles available and showcase the industry to new audiences.

## FIS attending showcase events

FIS is proud to support SkillBuild and was excited to attend the showcase events at Burnley College and Lewisham College. We will also be present at York College on 2 July. We encouraged our members to support the 19 regional showcase events and use these opportunities to engage with local schools and colleges. Our aim is to ensure that key interior trades such as drylining, plastering, carpentry, and joinery have a strong presence in the competition, continuing to promote our sector.

## SkillBuild at Burnley College



*Regional qualifier competitors showcases their skills*

At the Burnley College event, they also hosted an additional 'Construction Trades Expo,' featuring a wide range of construction employers, manufacturers, and leading technology companies. There were



opportunities to network with employers, colleges, and learners to discuss what FIS does and how they can get involved in skills and training.

This included highlighting our annual Training Awards in collaboration with the Worshipful Company of Plasterers, which recognise achievement and excellence across trades within the interiors sector. The event provides an opportunity to celebrate the winners and provide a networking occasion for like-minded individuals to come together.

The Training Awards recognise the achievement of apprentices and students who have exceeded expectations and recognises delivery of training by colleges and training providers.

To find out more or to submit an entry, visit [www.thefis.org/training-awards-home](http://www.thefis.org/training-awards-home)

### Lewisham College



James Minett having a go at moulding

FIS attended the showcase event at Lewisham College, and was joined by

FIS member Locker and Riley and Master Elect of Worshipful Company of Plasterers, **James Minett**, who was very interested in attending the event to learn more about SkillBuild and explore how FIS can continue to collaborate with the Worshipful Company of Plasterers to encourage more people to join our sector.

Locker and Riley brought along a 'have a go' activity with plaster and moulds. This activity drew an excited crowd, and participants tried their hand at plastering. They also had second-year apprentice **Jake Osmond** participating in the competition. Jake shared his experience: "I was proud to have been entered into the competition. When it dawned on me that I was competing, I initially found the event nerve-wracking, but I kept pushing myself forward and gave my best. As the competition went on, I realised I had made a few mistakes, which I then rectified. Regardless of the result, I found the overall experience very rewarding"

**Steve Plummer**, Director at Locker and Riley, said: "We at Locker and Riley encourage all of our apprentices and trainees to continually learn and grow. This sometimes places them outside of their comfort zone, but I believe the process is very beneficial and rewarding. The SkillBuild event is a fine example of this. To be put forward by your college to represent them at the regional competition is a huge honour and a fantastic achievement in itself. While there can only be one winner, the chance to compete and show your skills to a wider audience is, I believe, incredibly beneficial and character-forming. To all who entered, and to those who go through to the national event, very well done—you should be proud!"

It was truly inspiring to witness firsthand how the SkillBuild competition serves as a beacon for showcasing the talents and skills of vocational tradespeople across various trades. This competition provides a valuable platform for apprentices and

trainees to demonstrate their expertise, gain recognition, and inspire the next generation of skilled workers. The event not only emphasises the significance of vocational training but also fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment among all competitors.

Engaging with SkillBuild has many benefits:

- **Addressing the skills gaps in skills and training:** It can work to address these gaps by developing targeted training programs and initiatives, ensuring that the workforce meets industry needs, and also ensure these trades are promoted.
- **Build a pipeline of talented individuals who are well-prepared to enter the workforce:** This ensures a steady supply of skilled workers for the industry, helping to mitigate labour shortages.
- **FIS members and employers can contribute to setting and maintaining high industry standards:** Their participation ensures that the competition reflects real-world industry requirements and challenges.
- **Provides opportunities for mentoring and leadership, providing guidance and leadership to emerging talent:** This helps shape the future workforce and ensures the continuity of high standards in the industry.

Looking ahead, the skills and experiences gained from SkillBuild will undoubtedly elevate the competitors' careers and continue to benefit the vocational community. More than just a competition, SkillBuild is a celebration of craftsmanship, a testament to the value of skilled labour, and a catalyst for future growth and innovation in the trades industry. It not only highlights individual talent but also promotes the importance of vocational skills, ensuring a thriving and skilled workforce for years to come.

To find out more visit:

[www.goconstruct.org/skillbuild](http://www.goconstruct.org/skillbuild)



Regional qualifier competitors showcase their skills



Visitors trying out moulding with plaster

# THE UNINTENTIONAL MANUFACTURER

In light of the evolving legislative landscape, **James Parlour**, FIS Technical and Vetting Manager, discusses the risk of a distributor or a contractor becoming the unintended manufacturer.



James Parlour,  
FIS Technical and  
Vetting Manager

For many of us in construction, the word manufacturer conjures up an image of a factory mass-producing products from raw materials. Some colloquial definitions reinforce these ideas by

referring to the scale of production or the ownership of production facilities. We do not tend to think of a distributor or a contractor as a manufacturer, but the risk of becoming the unintended manufacturer is greater than you might think given the shifting legislative landscape.

For example, it might be obvious when a component is substituted from a manufacturer's system that responsibility has shifted, but more complex examples exist where a "kit" of components might be assembled on-site for the first time and a contractor might fall into a liability without knowing it.

Back in 2022<sup>1</sup> in SpecFinish, we explored how it is possible for parties to unintentionally inherit the role of designer along with all the associated responsibilities. Similarly, the term "manufacturer" in construction legislation and its relationship

with product definitions allows for some parties to unintentionally take on similar roles and responsibilities, sometimes without being equipped to fulfil them.

## How is the law changing?

Under UK law, the definition of a manufacturer is "an individual or business who manufactures a product, or has a product designed or manufactured and markets that product under their name or trademark". Manufacturers of construction products are now regulated by the Construction Products Regulator (CPR)<sup>2</sup>. The CPR sits in the Office of Product Safety (OPSS) and there is growing harmonisation between the General Product Safety Regulations (where case law has already determined that a contractor can be deemed a "producer of product"<sup>3</sup>) and the regulation of construction products.

The Building Safety Act (BSA) makes this claim easier to prove by defining a producer of a product as "Persons carrying out activities in relation to construction products" including (without limitation):

- (a) a manufacturer of construction products
- (b) a person who markets or supplies construction products to others, and
- (c) a person who imports construction products into the United Kingdom for use, marketing or supply;

The Construction Products Cause for Action<sup>4</sup> has been carried into law by the BSA and sets down the ability to claim against a product manufacturer, distributor, supplier, etc. who has supplied a defective or mis-sold product that has caused a breach of Building Regulations<sup>5</sup> necessitating remediation.

This definition can be interpreted, albeit broadly, to encompass anyone who supplies a construction product when you consider a few factors, particularly in the case of the following common examples:

- A distributor who sells components that are intended to be used together to form a unique kit of parts.
- A distributor sells products under their trade name which are manufactured in whole or in part by others.
- A contractor who installs a set of components not previously warranted by another manufacturer.

## The role of the product/kit

The nature of how construction products and kits are defined could have a significant effect on the interpretation of when a product is placed on the market and by whom.

The definition of a construction product is "any product or kit which is produced and placed on the market for incorporation in a permanent manner in construction works or parts thereof and the performance of which has an effect on the performance of the construction works for the basic requirements for construction works".

Subsequently, the definition of a kit is "a construction product placed on the market by a single manufacturer as a set of at least two separate components that need to be put together to be incorporated in the construction works".

Whilst it is possible to procure and install a complete kit or product from a single manufacturer, these product definitions do allow for significant variation to what is traditionally considered a "kit" leading to multiple scenarios where the responsibilities of the original manufacturer could be superseded by another party responsible for the product eventually installed in the following ways:



Design responsibility



Organisational competence



Comprehensive product data



Performance warranties



Conformity marking and DoPs



Third party product certification



- If one or more components are substituted from an original manufacturer's kit then the new kit is likely to be considered a unique construction product. Drywall partitions are an example of this where seemingly identical components can be substituted and assumed to perform similarly.
- Where a complete set of components has already been tested and/or warranted by another manufacturer for some performance characteristic/s, other characteristics may not be warranted, and the final product may be considered unique for these characteristics. Fire door assemblies are an example of this where the components have been tested by a core/blank manufacturer who can still warrant the fire performance, but may not guarantee other performance characteristics at the same time such as acoustic insulation or robustness and security.
- Construction kits may be considered at the level of a "sub-assembly" that can exist as part of a larger kit not supplied by the original manufacturer. Suspended ceiling kits are an example of this where BS EN 13964 allows for a "suspension kit" to be placed on the market that when installed as a complete ceiling (including tiles) may be considered a unique construction product.
- Any time a complete set of components has been tested and/or warranted by another manufacturer, but that kit is not supplied in full by that manufacturer, the complete kit may be considered to have been manufactured by the party who sourced the final assembly.
- Any of the above circumstances can act together in combination.

### What are the inherited responsibilities?

It may not be the case that the unintentional party is considered the manufacturer for every possible responsibility. It is more likely that a portion of the responsibilities typically assumed to fall on the original manufacturer

are superseded by the unintentional party.

Some of the responsibilities associated with the manufacturer role that need to be considered are:

- A requirement to demonstrate organisational competence<sup>6</sup> has some unique applications for manufacturers that need to be considered.
- Manufacturers have individuals who are competent at different levels (including sales and marketing staff) to understand or interpret BS or EN test evidence through a number of EXAP, DIAP and assessment methodologies and to make or relay accurate performance claims against specified standards using correct terminology.
- The Code for Construction Product Information<sup>7</sup> (CCPI) is an independent third-party assessment of a manufacturer's performance claims, that can also be undertaken by Merchants and Distributors. The full code<sup>8</sup> is free to download and contractors should consider applying the principles to their processes.
- The golden thread<sup>9</sup> requires that the right information get to the right people at the right time. In the case of manufacturers, comprehensive product data is key.
- Product information should be communicated on a product data-sheet (PDS) based on a product data template (PDT) which sets the convention for the structure of the information.
- Product data needs to communicate detailed information regarding; dimensional and volumetric, construction (installation and interface), performance, identification including conformity marking, inspection requirements, and guidance on de-installation/end of service life.
- Responsibility to provide certain performance warranties and evidence of performance may or may not remain within the scope of the original manufacturer so consider the requirement for warranties of other performance characteristics, which

are often numerous and may not appear directly in the specification.

- A familiarity with relevant product standards may be required to understand the full warranty requirements.
- There may be a requirement to produce<sup>10</sup> a declaration of performance and conformity mark in accordance with a designated product standard under the construction products legislation<sup>11</sup>.
- Manufacturers have means of identifying and managing product defects after they have been supplied and put into service, along with protocols for product recall.
- Design responsibility may also be inherited as a function of manufacturer/producer responsibilities in accordance with the guidance and rationale given in the unintentional designer.



Source

1. [www.specfinish.co.uk/the-unintentional-designer](http://www.specfinish.co.uk/the-unintentional-designer)
2. <https://tinyurl.com/wxmejpp>
3. [www.specfinish.co.uk/the-forgotten-dutyholder](http://www.specfinish.co.uk/the-forgotten-dutyholder)
4. [www.gov.uk/guidance/redress-measures-information-sheet](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/redress-measures-information-sheet)
5. [www.gov.uk/housing-local-and-community/building-regulation](http://www.gov.uk/housing-local-and-community/building-regulation)
6. [www.thefis.org/membership-hub/publications/sector-guides/competency-management-plans](http://www.thefis.org/membership-hub/publications/sector-guides/competency-management-plans)
7. [www.cpicode.org.uk](http://www.cpicode.org.uk)
8. [www.cpicode.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Code-for-Construction-Product-Information-v1-0.pdf](http://www.cpicode.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Code-for-Construction-Product-Information-v1-0.pdf)
9. <https://tinyurl.com/4ckvhw2u>
10. <https://tinyurl.com/mrprb5su>
11. [www.gov.uk/guidance/construction-products-regulation-in-great-britain](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/construction-products-regulation-in-great-britain)



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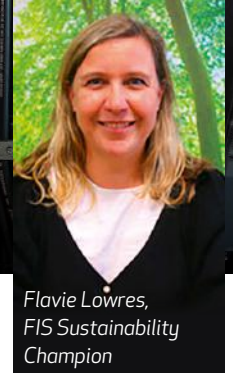
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# WELCOME TO THE PALLET REVOLUTION



Flavia Lowres,  
FIS Sustainability  
Champion

A look at a smart sustainability initiative that enables the recovery, repair, and reuse of high-specification pallets in the UK construction sector.

In 2022, FIS was the first trade body to sign a charter developed by The Pallet LOOP, the circular economy pallet reuse scheme that delivers a simple way of eliminating avoidable pallet waste. Signing the charter, FIS and other organisations acknowledged it was time for UK construction to change its behaviour around pallets.

Every year the sector uses an estimated 20 million pallets, but less than 10% are currently reused. To create construction industry pallets, an estimated 6000 acres of forestry are harvested every year, with a further 236,000 acres grown to cater to future demand. Within the finishes and interiors sector alone it is estimated that there are around 25 pallets used per £100,000 of turnover.

To deliver a step change in the transportation of building materials throughout the UK, The Pallet LOOP has created a range of pallets that can be used repeatedly. Crucially, it will also be incentivising pallet returns via a cost-effective, easy-to-administer nationwide collections service that will pay up to £4 back for every branded green pallet put back in the LOOP by registered return partners.

In 2020, the Green Construction Board published a report called 'zero avoidable waste in construction' and a roadmap to provide guidance and actions to reduce waste throughout the life cycle of a project. The first report estimates that the construction industry spends roughly £11 million per year to deal with wastes responsible for 3.5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. The Alliance for Sustainable Building Products (ASBP) published a report on 'zero avoidable packaging wastes'. The report highlights that packaging is often seen as functional but valueless once used and packaging such as

stretch wrap, boxes or pallets are often used only once. In order for a packaging solution to work in the most efficient way and help reduce the environmental impact of products, it needs to be communicated clearly to the supply chain and embedded in the process. The Pallet LOOP scheme provides a great opportunity to reduce the number of pallets

wasted every year. It is great to see that it is a process that has been endorsed by the supply chain, from the manufacturer, but also contractor such as ISG.

**Flavia Lowres**, FIS Sustainability Champion, spoke to two FIS members who have signed the LOOP charter to gather their perspectives on this initiative.

**Dean O'Sullivan**, Managing Director at British Gypsum, explained that British Gypsum has become the first building materials manufacturer in the UK to become a strategic partner of The Pallet LOOP.

Dean said: "We use approximately 1.6 million white timber pallets every year but the switch to a circular pallet re-use scheme is set to radically reduce the avoidable waste that can result from pallets being disposed of unsustainably. The landmark move supports our commitment to achieving net zero carbon by 2050, and the initiative is one of many set out in our sustainability roadmap, which aims to minimise waste, reuse materials and tackle emissions to reduce environmental impact at every stage of the build. It is hoped that using The Pallet LOOP reusable pallets and service-led collection model, will also enable us to work with our customers to support their reductions in waste and net zero targets.

"Pallets left behind after products have been removed have, for a long time, created a challenge, with many being unsustainably disposed of at a heavy environmental cost. By joining forces with



Dean O'Sullivan, Managing  
Director at British Gypsum

The Pallet LOOP, we aim to significantly reduce this practice."

Dean explained that British Gypsum will be rolling out The Pallet LOOP scheme in two stages, with the instantly identifiable, green-coloured LOOP pallets scheduled to be in circulation from May for bagged plaster and accessories. From July, the plasterboard range, based on pallet size, will begin to transition over, resulting in 70% of British Gypsum products being delivered on reusable pallets once the scheme is fully operational. It is hoped the remaining 30% will move across during a later phase of the project.

[www.british-gypsum.com](http://www.british-gypsum.com)

ISG is the first main contractor to have a dedicated policy related to implementing the principles of the circular economy. These principles centre around reusing, repurposing and remanufacturing products/systems/materials and implementing systematic circular economy audits and materials passports across all relevant projects, explained **Peter Kelly**, Group Director of Sustainable Operations at ISG.

Peter said: "The disposal of packaging waste poses a challenge to the construction industry relating to the down-cycling of materials, but also through the amplification of carbon emissions from energy expended through chipping, recycling and baling activities.

"The Pallet LOOP initiative is a smart response to dealing with the significant number of pallets that end up as waste

material on construction sites. We recognise that the current widespread use of single-trip pallets is unsustainable and support The Pallet Loop solution, which enables the recovery, repair, and reuse of pallets in the UK construction sector. This introduces a circular economy enabled, closed-loop route for pallets, reducing the need for virgin timber to be used in the construction of pallets, minimising waste on-site and associated carbon emissions, and sending a message to our suppliers and customers that we are serious about the ultimate elimination of waste."

Peter concluded by saying: "With increased scrutiny on the construction industry from customers, investors and public sector bodies to demonstrate greater sustainable behaviours, the introduction of The Pallet LOOP is a welcome step forward for the sector



*Peter Kelly,  
Group Director  
of Sustainable  
Operations at ISG*

to show its commitment to delivering against this challenge. We endorse this new scheme and we're well advanced in embedding the repatriation of pallets across our operations to reduce waste and carbon emissions."

[www.isg ltd.com](http://www.isg ltd.com)

**Paul Lewis**, Founder of The Pallet LOOP, said: "At LOOP, our mission is to transform the way building materials move. We are incredibly excited that British Gypsum is partnering with us to promote a culture of pallet reuse. We are also grateful to those organisations like FIS who originally signed our charter. We can't wait for our LOOP pallets to be in circulation and look forward to other building material manufacturers adopting our circular pallet reuse model.

"We have recently rolled out the green-coloured pallets and are encouraging all pallet recipients to sign up for the collection service by emailing: [setmeup@thepalletloop.com](mailto:setmeup@thepalletloop.com). Signing up for pallet collections is simple and

as mentioned will enable registered companies to access a PayBack of up to £4 for every green pallet they put back in the LOOP. In parallel, we will be continuing the collection of the white pallets, which is significantly cheaper than disposing of pallets via a wood skip."

Paul explained that once companies are set up, arranging collections of both green and white pallets is easy, with two service levels available: a standard 10-day or a rapid 72-hour pick-up service. Users of The Pallet LOOP will also receive access to a special reporting platform, where they can view and download information about the number of pallets returned and the money saved on collections versus



*Paul Lewis, Founder  
of The Pallet LOOP*

disposal via a skip. The system also provides information about the amount of carbon saved and trees repurposed, which can be used in sustainability reporting.



**"We are incredibly excited that British Gypsum is partnering with us to promote a culture of pallet reuse."**

### Get in the LOOP

The Pallet LOOP has created a short onboarding video that explains how to get in the LOOP in a series of simple steps. To view the video visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAAMrYk-2P0&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAAMrYk-2P0&t=1s)

[www.thepalletloop.com](http://www.thepalletloop.com)



*Turning the pallets green - The spray booth*

# MENTORING SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE BUILDING AND FIT-OUT SECTOR



*Jim Nania, Founder of Arden Business Services*

**Jim Nania** reflects on his extensive career in the fit-out sector where he spent 18 years on the board of FIS and its previous guises including two years as President of the Association of Interior Specialists (AIS). We find out how his new consultancy business is going, what led to its formation, and how he can help.

Jim, who is a familiar figure to many of you, explained to David Crowson, Editor, that what sowed the seed and gave him the confidence to set up his own business with his partner at the time was that in the early eighties, he spent some time in Saudi Arabia on secondment, setting up a local office to supply and install partitioning systems and related products. In 1992 a few years after returning to the UK, he started a small business called Stortford Interiors. Over the years, he grew the business, taking it from small beginnings to what it is today - a major contractor specialising in the supply and installation of wall, ceiling, and interior solutions across the UK, with a highly skilled workforce, an experienced management team, a reputation for excellence and an extensive client base.

We discussed Jim's thoughts on the last thirty or so years. He said: "When I think back to those early years at Stortford Interiors, it was evident that we were a little naïve. What helped us greatly was becoming a member of our trade association, now known as FIS. They provided us with significant structural resources regarding legislation, building standards, technical information, access to member events, and so on.

"Our industry has changed hugely. Technology has enabled us to be far more productive in every aspect of business. Remember fax machines, stopping at telephone boxes to make calls, the lack of basic QA recording standards? At Stortford Interiors, we embraced technology very early on and invested heavily in integrating IT into all aspects of business. This was a game changer and something I would encourage.

"Although we continue to face challenges with more robust legislation, health, and safety standards, quality standards, and environmental requirements to meet zero carbon, it certainly is a very different world—however, the better for it.

"Our industry is truly blessed with great people and businesses who, on the whole, just want a better life, do a better job, and become a better business, and I love them for it."

Jim shared: "In late 2023, after 31 years,

I decided to leave Stortford. The business was in good shape, ready to embrace a new, sustainable future in very capable hands following a management buyout. While I had hugely enjoyed my time there, I felt it was time to move on, enabling me to share the wealth of experience I had gained over the years.

"It had been a long-term aim to mentor and guide other small businesses looking to develop to the next level, and so I launched Arden Business Services. I've learned a lot over the years, and what I'm seeing now are too many small business owners being 'hands-on', working in the business, not on it. My experience has taught me that if you want to achieve your goals, you need to work on your business."

For Jim, it is a new challenge to help others reach the goals that Stortford Interiors achieved.

## Market's response

While still in its infancy, Jim's consultancy has been well received, Jim said: "Some nine months on from starting Arden Business Services, the market response indicates there's a real need for advice from experienced people from those looking to implement change. With growth as the predominant theme, smaller businesses are looking for a mentor with whom they can share their journey.



*Jim Nania accepting his FIS Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021*

# PEOPLE IN BRIEF

“Since starting Arden Business Services I’ve been working with a number of small businesses within the building and fit-out sector. What unites these enterprises is a shared requirement for support - a reliable sounding board for matters relating to business development, venturing into new markets, and navigating issues related to structure and processes.”

## Great advice that can benefit fit-out businesses

Jim said: “People, performance, cash, and profitability are key, but have a business plan in place that spans the next five years or so. Without a plan and vision, the business is rudderless and lacks direction. Your plan should be flexible, based on a vision for the future and an acknowledgment of goals and aspirations. A key component, and something you should be thinking about from day one, is your exit strategy, which will shape your decision-making process from the start. For example, do you ultimately want to sell up, pass on the business to a management buyout, or put a manager in place to run the business while you keep the majority share?”

“One of the things I have learned over the years is it can be lonely at the top, so when I first took the helm at Stortford Interiors, one of my early steps was to create a Board of Directors, giving me a sounding board whenever I needed it. A lot of business owners don’t have this.

“People management, and the ability to recognise an individual’s potential, are also key to achieving ultimate business goals, so when looking at how to achieve your goals, you should draw up an organisational chart that assesses your key people, looking at their defined responsibilities and how you rate their performance. Their capability and potential are of paramount importance, and carrying out a Team Assessment that drills down into their roles will ensure you have the right people in place to carry your business forward”

## Changing trends

Without doubt the new Building Safety Act provides all in our industry huge challenges to ensure we have the right processes to manage, record and implement QA systems that ensure compliance. What I’m seeing now is a steep learning curve that businesses need to get on top of to ensure they understand their duties under the act and demonstrate compliance “the Golden Thread”.

To examine the issues you face, discuss your goals and how to implement them, and create a business plan designed to fulfil your vision, contact Jim on **07970 126226** or email [jim.nania@ardenbusiness.co.uk](mailto:jim.nania@ardenbusiness.co.uk) [www.ardenbusiness.co.uk](http://www.ardenbusiness.co.uk)



## Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity announces new CEO

Following the retirement of CEO Bill Hill after more than a decade of dedicated service, Sarah Bolton has been appointed as the new CEO of the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity. Under Bill’s leadership, the charity has experienced remarkable growth, both in terms of the number of families helped and the number of charitable services the charity offers.

Sarah brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role and in the past five years with the charity she has transformed the charitable services being delivered across the construction community. She has also fostered a dynamic senior management team ready to take on the challenges and future growth of the charity. [www.lighthouseclub.org](http://www.lighthouseclub.org)



## CCF appoints a new Head of Customer Sustainability

CCF has appointed Phil Monkman to the newly created role of Head of

Customer Sustainability as part of its ongoing commitment to improving environmental and operational efficiency within the supply chain.

Phil will build on CCF’s commitment to developing practical solutions to help customers meet their targets for a lower carbon future. It’s a role centred around innovation – he’ll be developing new ways of working collaboratively through the entire supply chain, looking at the key issues of reducing carbon emissions, increasing recycling, and supporting waste management to deliver tangible results for its customers. [www.ccf ltd.co.uk](http://www.ccf ltd.co.uk)



## Charlie Heath succeeds Andy Paton as Managing Director of London’s Core team

Overbury announced that Andy Paton, Managing Director of the London Core team responsible for delivering projects up to £12m, retired 1 May after 32 years of distinguished service.

In succeeding Andy, Charlie Heath has been appointed as the new Managing Director. Charlie joined the business over 15 years ago as a graduate, where he quickly rose through the ranks to the role of Contracts Manager; a role he has excelled in for the past eight and a half years.

[www.overbury.com](http://www.overbury.com)



## CPA welcomes Adam Turk as new Chair

The Construction Products Association (CPA) welcomes Adam Turk, CEO

of Siderise Group, as its new Chair. With decades of experience across the construction industry, and having supported the CPA for over 15 years, Adam is well-placed to provide both leadership and insight as CPA move into a new phase for the sector. Adam said on his appointment: “I am very honoured to have been appointed as the next CPA Chairman.

The construction products industry is a great industry. One I am very proud to have been a part of for many years, and one that I am now excited to help lead for what promises to be an interesting period as the building safety regime begins to embed itself. I believe that, with the right focus and application, the construction product industry can get the attention it deserves, and we can create a trusted, successful and financially strong sector of the British economy.”

To read more on Adam’s appointment visit: [www.specfinish.co.uk/cpa-welcomes-adam-turk-as-new-chair](http://www.specfinish.co.uk/cpa-welcomes-adam-turk-as-new-chair) [www.constructionproducts.org.uk](http://www.constructionproducts.org.uk)



# CHANGING THE FACE OF THE FIT-OUT SECTOR

FIS gathered together a group of industry figures – a mix of specialisms, gender, ethnicity and age – to discuss how the sector can improve inclusiveness and attractiveness to bring the next generation of workers to the fit-out sector.

## Participants

**Michelle Armstrong**, Head of Membership at FIS (roundtable chair)  
**Genghis Akay**, Director at Radii Planet  
**Nourdeen Al-Ghariba**, Metal Fixer, at Platt and Reilly  
**Samuel Asiamah**, Director at Altar Construction  
**Anna Cooper**, Design Manager at Architectural Wallsz  
**Greg Greves**, Membership Co-ordinator at FIS  
**Chloe Holland**, Compliance Manager at Flynn Interiors  
**Hayriye Mazzotta**, Executive Assistant at SCL London  
**Liz McDermott**, Director at QuickFix Profiles  
**Iain McIlwee**, Chief Executive at FIS  
**Dan Morris**, Account Director at CCF  
**Edward Tapper**, Senior Site Supervisor at Tapper Interiors  
**Oliver Turkman**, Business Development Manager at Apton Partitioning  
**Kinga Zadora**, Regional Sales Manager at Ocula Partitions

The scale of the problem is huge. “Just to stand still, we need to recruit 12 secondary schools full of kids every year.” This was opening salvo of FIS Chief Executive Iain McIlwee to participants at a roundtable event in London in April to discuss what could be done to attract more people to the sector. “The best we’ve ever done is six schools, which means we rely on a migrant workforce

to top up the numbers. But with the recent announcements on migration, that tap has well and truly been turned off.”

But it’s not all about scale. At a time when construction urgently needs more workers, he said, the built environment sector’s record for diversity is “pretty atrocious on almost every measure – women make up 14% of our workforce and ethnic minorities 6%.”

Youngsters need a clear timeline for how they can progress, the roundtable agreed, and how their earning potential can improve.

“We have to pique their interest in construction,” said a panellist. “What we do is incredible. We change the face of cities, we change skylines.”

One delegate suggested creating a time-lapse video of a construction project taking shape over a long period to spark interest among young people and offset the negative impact of the many videos already online that mock the trade.

And that positive message has to start early. “It’s important to impress upon young kids how amazing the sector is, to set expectations early,” one panellist urged.

Attention spans are short, said another, so “if we create a bad impression, we’ve lost them forever.”

A point repeatedly raised was the impact both negative and positive of social media. “A lot of young people are looking for a quick fix, to get famous on YouTube,” said one, with another emphasising the need to make the construction industry “more attractive than TikTok”.



At the same time, there was a feeling that “it’s only going to be social media propaganda that’s going to get to them”.

“We’ve become a world where everything moves too fast and everyone expects to make a buck in 30 seconds,” said a panellist. “We have to give a progression path to kids: you come on site, you become an apprentice, there is a path you can follow.”

Part of the challenge was to make the younger generation realise what it meant to provide a service, suggested one participant. “We’re not going to change the youth; we have to work out how to adapt to meet them.”

Many schoolchildren don’t want to sit in front of a laptop all day, the roundtable heard, but lots of them don’t know what their skills can be used for.

The fit-out sector must urgently spell out to schoolchildren the many different options on offer in construction.

“Before students go to college, the industry should be all over them,” said a panellist. “A lot of them don’t want to go to college and they don’t know what to do. This is the time to speak to them.”

And the problem is not just young people. Several on the roundtable agreed that teachers and careers advisers tended to see construction as a “sub-par career”, a job for dropouts.

There was pressure at school to go into academia and if you didn’t, there was something wrong with you. “It’s the people influencing the youth that’s the problem,” said a panellist. “Teachers have a low regard for careers in construction.”

Other negative experiences at school fed into this. One participant who had been keen to work in a creative sector said a week’s work experience at an architecture firm killed off their interest in construction because of

the team’s lack of enthusiasm. The aspiring designer opted for a law degree instead.

### Community spirit

Building a sense of community and belonging is essential, the panel agreed, to make the sector more attractive to young people, women and those from minority groups.

Many said it was easy to feel isolated in what was often seen as an older, male-dominated world – a sense of isolation described by one participant as “brutal”.

One woman panellist said her early career was fast paced and exciting but “progressing into more senior positions... I became very lonely, working with only older men”.

“I just did not have a social aspect to my job. I only started to get that when I got involved with groups such as Women in Construction.” →



**“I want more women to think of drylining. A lot of them don’t; they think about electrician work or plumbing, but I want to get more of them on site on the tools”**





**“Everyone wants to work in a beautiful office space but nobody stops to think how it was made. It’s like making a TikTok video but over a much longer time”**

Support groups will be key to providing “somewhere to go, a safe place”, particularly for youngsters coming into the sector, one panellist said.

“The younger generation don’t make as many phone calls, they don’t talk to each other as much, so to know there’s someone you can reach out to is important. Getting a second opinion or learning from others can make such a difference in terms of motivation.”

One participant said it was also important for those in senior roles to meet others outside work to help them recharge. “The day job isn’t the only thing to get you out of bed; it’s the community you want to contribute to.”

Several panellists flagged up a tendency for people in construction to be “quite closed” and to “not talk about failures or things they’ve done wrong”. This in itself was seen as an isolating factor, regardless of ethnicity or gender.

### Positive impact

But there is much to be positive about, said panellists. Many highlighted the ‘wow factor’ of working on a blank canvas and helping create something stunning.

“It’s amazing what everyone does,” enthused one participant. “With other industries it’s less measurable, but in construction there’s tangible progress. The buildings are always there.”

One delegate suggested individual companies map out the projects they’d been involved in, both to show their workers, and those outside the business, the impact they’ve had. “We need more people to be more proud,” one panellist said.

The Building Safety Act and competency frameworks were seen as central to instilling more pride in the fit-out sector. Too often operatives described themselves as “just a dryliner”, despaired one delegate, yet “this is a proper job; it’s fundamental”.

The participants applauded the impact of awards programmes such as the FIS’s. “A lot of people need a pat on the back,” said one.

It was important to acknowledge achievements, agreed another panellist. “It doesn’t need to be big or fancy or telling everyone, but sometimes that little bit of recognition sent out makes a big point.”

That panellist’s company featured a ‘designer of the week’ in their regular newsletter, which provided extra validation for that person’s work.

### What should we be doing better?

The jobs-for-the-boys culture must end. Panellists pointed to a culture of nepotism in the sector as an entrenched problem that should be changed.

With such a long-serving workforce, the emphasis was often on giving each other jobs; finding new and younger people was

seen as too much effort, particularly among SMEs, which were sometimes less able or willing to put time and effort into training.

Making more effort with minority groups and women was also critical. "There needs to be a greater focus on BAME [Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic] groups – that's lacking so much," said one member of the group.

Although more women were getting ahead in construction, the sector was urged to keep its focus on flexible working options.

One delegate commented: "We don't advertise the sector as having an attractive maternity package, where you can have a family and come back. You get all this training and experience and then what happens when you decide to have a family?"

And on a practical level, women shouldn't be put off jobs such as drylining because of the weight of boards. Firms should change practices to make the work of dryliners more manageable, with boards cut to shape at ground level before installation on higher floors, for example.

Most agreed that construction has an image problem to overcome; delegates were keen for it to be younger and cooler – "Grafting used to be cool but it's not anymore," said one. "These days it's more about the soft life."

However, another warned: "It's important that before we reach out with a positive image we have our house in order."

Banter was one area seen as potentially damaging to morale, while the use of acronyms and jargon often excluded many from discussions.

In fact, communication was seen as a crucial part of attracting people to the sector. "We need to have difficult conversations with people, challenge

stereotypes and push back," said a panellist – another area where people would need help and support.

**In summary**

Summing up, the chair asked the panellists to consider what their legacy would be to the industry. Several re-emphasised their aim to keep overcoming barriers, provide more support, campaign for flexible working and improve training routes.

One delegate emphasised the importance of showing you can have a family as well as a full-time job. And one concluded simply: "The goal should be to leave your workplace a little bit better than when you started with it."

**"Construction has changed my life. I've built myself a career, I have a direction to my life, which a lot of people would benefit from"**



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# AN EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW: CHECKLIST FOR BS 8000-8

**Joe Cilia**, FIS Technical Director, discusses some of the key recommendations from the code of practice that you can apply now from the forthcoming BSI checklist.



Joe Cilia,  
FIS Technical Director

and supersedes BS 8000-8:1994 and BS 8212:1995, which have been withdrawn.

The purpose of BS 8000-8 is to encourage good design and workmanship by providing:

- a) guidance for designers on the selection of systems;
- b) guidance for installers on the correct sequence and method of installation; and
- c) updated tolerances reflecting use and material installation and methods of measurement.

This is a full revision of the Code of Practice, and introduces the following principal changes:

- 1) clarification of tolerances.
- 2) advice when installing drylining to steel framing systems (SFS);
- 3) testing of drylining systems; and
- 4) expansion of relevant performance recommendations.

These workmanship standards are often included in specifications to describe the tolerances and the level of finish expected in the final build. However, they can also be used as part of a quality assurance process to check that the specification and build are compliant.

The Code of Practice not only includes a directory of standard terms and definitions but includes seven sections containing individual clauses taking a project from preparation to storage checking and handling to deviations and tolerances as well as environmental conditions when installing and coordinating with other trades, handing over, and checking the work.

BSI, with the support of FIS and colleagues from the industry, will be publishing a freely available checklist later this summer, and this preview contains some of the key recommendations that you can use to quality check projects from today.

The BS 8000-8 Design and installation of drylining systems - Code of Practice was published by the British Standards Institution (BSI) in 2023

1	Have the background structural tolerances been checked to ensure the tolerances described in the Code of Practice can be achieved using the systems specified?
2	Has the safe delivery and movement of materials been planned and communicated with the team?
3	Have the working conditions been assessed before starting work?
4	Were the buildings watertight, waterproof, and dry before commencing any drylining?
5	Is there laboratory test evidence or evidence of classification for the drylining in the project file?
6	Has the designer allowed for any building movement to be accommodated in the specification of the drylining?
7	Has the designer specified a system that meets the robustness performance requirements in accordance with BS 5234-2?
8	Has moisture-resistant plasterboard been specified where intermittent moisture applications [Relative Humidity (RH)] are above 70%?
9	Has the drylining been sealed around the perimeter, to all joints, and to any service penetrations to block air paths and thus prevent uncontrolled movement of air, where drylining systems contribute to the control of air permeability?
10	Has the designer assessed the quality required in the finished work and chosen systems that fulfil those requirements?
11	Has the designer specified tighter tolerances than are described in this standard; if so, has this been communicated with the specialist contractor before it was tendered?
12	Have the tolerances of the installed SFS been checked prior to the design and installation of the plasterboard?
13	Has the partitioning or lining been installed within an 8mm deviation band?
14	Is the crown on a joint installed within 3mm?
15	Is the build-up of external corners within 4mm?
16	Is the thickness of the partition within + 5mm?
17	Door, access panel or other openings in partitions within the following tolerances: a) width: +10/-0mm; and b) height: +5/-0mm?
18	Is the ceiling within + 2mm, measured at the ceiling perimeter?
19	Have penetrations and partial penetrations been constructed in accordance with test evidence certification and classification reports to ensure the drylining has not been compromised by the full or partial penetration?
20	Have the fixings been specified and installed in accordance with manufacturers'/system owners' instructions?
21	Have the correct jointing compounds and reinforcing tapes been specified and installed in accordance with the manufacturers'/system owners' instructions?
22	Have the access hatches been designed, specified, supplied and installed to maintain the performance characteristics of the drylining?
23	Has a control sample been built and agreed to have met the project requirements before proceeding with the remainder of the work? Was this sample maintained in an area where it was referenced throughout the contract?
24	Has all snagging been carried out under normal lighting conditions and a) from doorways and the centre of rooms in a typical dwelling; b) from 2m away from the surface in larger rooms; c) at eye level in the standing and sitting positions.

This Code of Practice is available for FIS SME contractor members to view online by visiting: [www.thefis.org/membership-hub/standards](http://www.thefis.org/membership-hub/standards)



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ONE STEP AHEAD.

# FROM BUST TO BOOM: NAVIGATING THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR'S SLIM MARGINS AND CASH CRUNCH

**UK Construction Week**   
**LONDON**

7-9 MAY 2024 | EXCEL

Three industry experts share their thoughts and passion on the key factors contributing to contractors' success or failure.



(L-R) Paul Gaughan, CEO and Founder, Lumybel, Liz Barclay, Small Business Commissioner, Iain McIlwee, Chief Executive Officer, FIS, and Tom Ahmad, Co-Founder and Licensed Insolvency Practitioner, BABR

A seminar on the Barbour ABI Stage at UK Construction Week in London hosted a compelling and, at times, heartrending discussion around the subject of insolvency.

The panel **Iain McIlwee**, Chief Executive Officer at FIS, **Tom Ahmad**, Co-Founder and Licensed Insolvency Practitioner at BABR, **Paul Gaughan**, CEO and Founder of Lumybel and **Liz Barclay** Small Business Commissioner, examined cash flow challenges and insolvency risks in a commoditised market. They provided valuable insight into the insolvency process, differences between struggling and thriving specialist contractors, uncovering strategies to prevent receivership and fostering long-term viability in the industry.

Liz opened the seminar by introducing the topic and explaining the need for the Small Business Commissioner to champion and support SMEs in our supply chains, ensuring they are treated and paid fairly.

Iain followed with the statement that 4,403 UK contractors went out of business in the year to February 2024 and he suspects other companies just quietly turned off the lights. This is the highest company failure rate in construction since the 2008 financial crisis, and the numbers have continued to rise.

## The challenges

Iain explained that following the end of the pandemic, contractors received extensions of time but not cost, depleting working capital. Subsequently, they were hit by a period of hyperinflation, resulting in setbacks on fixed-price jobs. The full impact was initially masked by the availability of cheap credit from COVID loans, which now need to be repaid.

Furthermore, high material prices and labour rates in our sector have surged by 40-50% over the past three years, with an additional 5% increase in the second half of last year alone. This is unprecedented territory for many companies and individuals, some of whom have fallen out of the habit of dealing with such challenges.

At the same time the market has been hit by double-digit declines in activity in house building, combined with aggressive procurement tactics aiming to squeeze the supply chain. Projects in other parts of the market are slipping due to high interest rates and concerns surrounding legislative changes. Additionally, new regulatory requirements, which are difficult to price, mean the cost of compliance continues to rise and the upfront expenses of projects have substantially increased. The delay clauses that are ever more punitive are biting harder too.

There has also been a significant impact on the availability of credit due to prominent names like Henry and Buckingham Group ceasing to trade.

Iain said: "The result is that we are constantly in survival mode, the lessons of Carillion have not changed anything and the availability of credit and resilience in the supply chain remain an existential risk for construction."

Tom joined the conversation and echoed Iain's comments – reflecting that the numbers are very concerning for construction. He said: "Insolvency Practitioners (IPs) tend to get involved when businesses have exhausted everything they know how to do and the walls are still closing in."

He explained that businesses rely on so many things to come together at once and in the end, they focus just on margins and profit however, margins are tight and goalposts move really quickly. So, business is risky, and becoming an entrepreneur takes great courage. He said: "I know it's tough as nobody wants to fail so they put on a brave face, particularly to the staff and their family. If your business model is fragile, when pushed it will break, however, it's important to keep things moving forward and come out of it – or restart."

"When an IP becomes involved, the initial conversation with a business owner normally starts with them saying, 'I don't know where to start, I have a problem, I have already exhausted all the things that I think I can do with my team and I have avoided speaking to someone like you until now'."

"We normally establish quite quickly that typically, the result of one or two negative events builds up and eventually breaks the camel's back. At this point, we can start to look at the options available. But as help was sought from an IP quite late, when there was little choice left, the options are limited. I see many entrepreneurs who are often optimistic and will shoulder the burden, trusting themselves to find a way. My advice would be that as soon as things become challenging, ask for help."

"In collaboration with FIS, this is something that BABR has been focusing on – trying to bring an IP in to advise earlier. The sooner you speak to an IP and review the debt and finance options, the more options you tend to have. I'm sure, some people do just shut up shop and let others suffer, but most people want to do the right thing. It is an emotional time. I liken losing a business to a bereavement, and it can take a long time to recover, with the attendant worry and guilt about anyone else caught up in the aftermath."

## The gritty reality

Paul picked up on Tom's points and bravely explained that he was at the helm of TwentyOne Construction, a specialist construction company that grew rapidly going into the pandemic but then ran into problems and entered administration in 2022. He added that, two years on, the process is still not complete.

Paul said: "I finally realised that the business could not carry on when we paid the staff and realised that while there were orders on the books, the money was not coming in quickly enough to support the business through the next couple of weeks. It was a surreal moment. It was equally strange, closing out jobs and working with the administrators to settle the debts and chase outstanding monies."

"While many dust themselves off and start again, I took a different approach and I am currently working as a consultant and doing a master's degree in sustainability."

Paul looped back to some of the issues raised by Liz and Iain in the opening exchange of the session and expressed his frustration and concern that construction remains its own worst enemy, with slim margins and aggressive pricing meaning there is little fat when problems arise – working capital remains a limiting factor to most businesses. Paul noted that this wasn't just amongst SMEs – problems up the supply chain are putting the squeeze on everybody.

## "Have you had conversations that surprised you?"

Liz put this question to Paul. He agreed with the sentiment expressed by Tom, noting that it is like a bereavement. Paul said: "It is tough when you have to tell your spouse and staff that the business can't carry on. Then you start breaking the news to people with whom you have built valued relationships and friendships over your career that they are not going to get paid. You know there will be a lot of people who are angry and will criticise you, and that's understandable, but some reacted differently and said, 'I know you've tried your best.'"

Paul explained that he had been on an emotional roller coaster, had many sleepless nights, and had to put on a brave face. He described the difficulty he had trying to negotiate with customers, stay positive with and for the team, and constantly worrying about the impact this was having on everyone else.

Liz commended Paul for speaking up and said: "Hearing from the person who's been there and lost the t-shirt means the messages are much stronger and, in my opinion, this will be the bit that people in



The insolvency seminar at UK Construction Week

the audience will remember. Although the technicalities may be lost on an audience, Paul's story will reverberate."

### Are we too obsessed with growth?

Liz asked the panel whether the growth agenda was part of the problem. Tom said: "Most entrepreneurs are risk-takers and will push beyond a normal person's comfort zone. Whatever stage you are at, you can be successful to a point, but it can be one leap too far that undoes you. It only takes a small push when you aren't balanced for you to fall over. It is critical to focus on the infrastructure of the business and the support you have access to, to get you over the next bit.

"We shouldn't fear failure, but we should be aware that it can happen. I suggest you keep your wits about you and avoid complacency. It's like driving; one moment you can be cruising along the motorway on a beautiful sunny morning, and suddenly the fog rolls in and visibility is limited. You need to adjust your speed and react accordingly. You must look ahead and make decisions based on what you can see. If the road ahead is unclear or obscured, slow down, stop and seek assistance."

### Prepare to fail if you fail to prepare

Tom and Paul also spoke about the importance of having a risk register. Tom explained that there are tragic scenarios where people lose their businesses because of ill health and this can occur when they don't understand when to take a break or stop. He said: "Sometimes you can't hustle your way out and need to call it a day. It is heartbreaking to hear that someone has effectively bet their house on turning the business around, only to see the money burned through in weeks."

Paul touched on the importance of building sustainable, consistent relationships through the supply chain, he said: "At times we have a bit of a disposable approach to supply chain relationships as we try to chase down the price. We need to focus on stronger more enduring relationships."

He stressed that we also need to have a clear cash position and cost plan carefully. He said: "It is critical to know what the cost of something really is in terms of labour, material and overhead. We also need clearer and better contractual relationships."

Paul concluded that profitable work starts with the right contract, controlling

the estimates properly, ensuring reasonable bids are put forward, and remembering to use the word 'no'. The 'responsible no', is a central campaign run by FIS. The campaign aims to encourage businesses to consider their capabilities and the risks they can absorb before committing to projects.

### Wrapping-up

Questions were received from the floor and late payment was discussed. Liz explained how her office is working through changes to the Late Payment Regulations and the Prompt Payment Code to try and improve culture. The question of deposits to improve the capitalisation of construction and limit the exposure and reliance on SMEs at the start of job created a healthy debate. FIS plans to repeat the discussion in a webcast soon, so keep an eye on the FIS website for updates. FIS is working with BABR to bring early intervention on insolvency, debt recovery, credit control and commercial finance matters via a free helpline accessible via **03332 419 014**.

<https://babr.co.uk>



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# THE FUTURE OF SPECFINISH

## What's your preference?

As environmental awareness rises, an increasing number of subscribers opt to receive a digital version of the magazine.

From 2025, unless you work for an FIS member, you will no longer receive a printed copy **unless** you confirm your preference for print, digital or both.

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# WHAT A CELEBRATION: HONOURING OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN OUR SECTOR

The FIS Contractors Awards Lunch is the finishes and interiors sector's most prestigious awards ceremony to recognise and celebrate excellence and outstanding projects.

The Awards Lunch was held on 6 June at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London.

The afternoon event gathered together almost 600 leading figures from the sector to celebrate the achievements of the winners and provide a networking opportunity for like-minded individuals to come together.

Guest speaker Shaparak Khorsandi led the proceedings, in which winners across nine categories were announced. All contracts entered were visited by two independent award judges and the architect or interior designer of the winning contracts also received an award.

The independent award judges Tony Pieri and Colin Hunter explained that this year, the competition between all the entries had been extremely high, with most scores achieving a similar benchmark. Tony said: "Our in-depth assessment of the work covers a range of factors: sustainability, design input, problem-solving, logistics, value-added initiatives and integration.

"As ever, the final judging evaluation comes down to minimal decimal point differences between those achieving or not achieving the winning standards.

"We take our responsibilities seriously as we fully understand the hard work and endeavour undertaken on every project. Once again, all the entries demonstrated the incredible ability of FIS members to achieve exceptionally high standards of workmanship.

"We congratulate all of you on your professionalism and expertise, and we thank you for the time and courtesy extended to us."

## A message from FIS President

"Caring about people is at the heart of the new regulatory wave that has swept over construction" says Philip Brown, FIS President

He adds "The Building Safety Act has transformed our regulatory landscape, re-centring it on duty-holders and accountability. It compels us to think beyond the project and consider the building as an asset, one that needs to be managed and maintained so that it delivers for the people in it."

There was much to cover and Phillip touched on topics such as; The Reading Report, Interior Systems now being recognised as one of the five super sectors in the Construction Leadership Council's work. FIS Manifesto's and the new Fit-out-Futures and Construction Ambassadors network.

He continues "The FIS team are making a difference - whether it be spearheading research, encouraging supply chain collaboration, issuing safety alerts or publishing detailed technical guides.

"We know we help individual businesses adapt. Our responsible No campaign was also drawn from the Reading Report. It is about empowering individuals within our supply chain with the knowledge to challenge the worst behaviours."

Phillip also announced the formal launch of Project Re-use, spearheaded by the FIS Sustainability Group, which is a new pilot physical re-use logistics hub that will be operational by the end of the year.

## The Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lifetime Achievement Award was posthumously awarded to Eddie McElhinney and was collected by his daughter, Siobhan McElhinney, Chairperson of SAS.

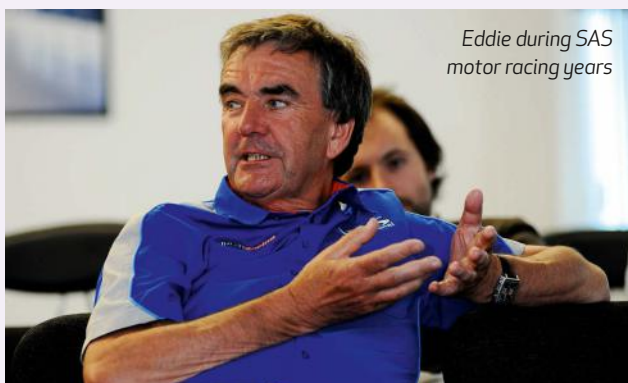
FIS President Philip Brown said: "Eddie was a true visionary and deeply respected by colleagues and customers all over the world. He was understated, but forthright, driven and passionate. Eddie understood the importance of profit but was driven by making a difference.

Having arrived in England from Ireland aged 17, Eddie took a job with ceiling company Horrace W Cullum (HWC). He then left HWC

to set up SAS International, a company that started in his living room and remains a UK manufacturer, still driven by innovation and a globally synonymous ceiling brand.

Always looking at how to do things better and eager to achieve what others couldn't, Eddie was also the driving force behind CCF. A business he developed, and that has helped shape the building materials distribution model in the UK."

Sadly, Eddie passed away in February 2023. The room was upstanding as Siobhan McElhinney accepted the Lifetime Achievement Award on her father's behalf."



*Eddie during SAS motor racing years*



*Siobhan McElhinney receives her father's award from FIS President Philip Brown*

## Project of the Year Winner

### Space Interior Systems, HVN, London



Space collaborated with client ISG and architect zynk Design to realise this remarkable project in one of London's most vibrant areas and created a serene and private ambiance in this high-end urban wellness retreat.

This project demanded an innovative approach to create a 'forest bathing' and sensory relaxation experience. The uniquely shaped drywall partitions and ceilings with an impressive sound insulation rating of 58dB, combine with the biophilic elements of the overall design. The curves, cornices, and alcoves throughout harmoniously integrate and flow through the space. These shapes were achieved with detailed design intent drawings, effective client communication,



and a flexible, freehand approach for precision. These features not only assure patron privacy but also contribute to a tranquil environment, enhancing the luxurious feel of the treatment rooms, pods, and seating areas.

The project presented a tight 20-week construction schedule however, Space met every key milestone and completed it on time. The client's expectations were exceeded in both design and quality, adhering to Space sustainability standards and budget constraints. Cornices and alcoves were made off-site to size, for example, significantly reducing waste. This efficient management ensured the project remained commercially viable, meeting practical completion and handover dates, and allowed the client ample preparation time for their highly anticipated flagship launch in October 2023.

### Guest judges' comments

Alain Speed of PRP Architects who determined the winner of the overall Project of the Year said: "Space Interior Systems' wellness spa for HVN stood out for the beautifully crafted biomorphic shapes, seamlessly blending ceilings and walls and integrating sophisticated interior planting.

"The project met all the challenges of setting out, achieving a high-quality finish, acoustic separation, a tight programme, and working within a listed building. This required close collaboration with client ISG and architect zynk Design. All the hard work is now done, and people can enjoy sensory relaxation within these luxuriant interiors."

### Interior Fit-Out

**Small contracts - under £3m** – Space Interior Systems, HVN, London  
Architect: zynk Design

**Large contracts - over £3m** – Portview Fit-out, London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London  
Architect: Allies & Morrison



### Ceilings

**Small contracts - under 1.5m** – Flynn Interiors, Gradel Quadrangles, Oxfordshire  
Architect: Purcell

**Large contracts - over £1.5m** – Integra Contracts, Northcliffe House, London  
Architect: John Roberts Architects



### Partitioning

**Small contracts - under £1m** – Profixed Interiors, Capital.com, London  
Designer: Modus Workspace

**Large contracts - over £1m** – Mansell Building Solutions, Aviva Studios, Manchester  
Architect: OMA



### Steel Framed Systems

Phoenix Drywall (UK), Sheffield Hallam University Campus, Sheffield  
Architect: BDP Architects



### Plastering

**Internal** – B&K Systems, SOYO, Leeds  
Architect: DLP Architects

**Fibrous and GRG** – George Jackson, Bacchanalia  
Interior Designer: MBDS



### Drylining commercial

V&D Interiors, Berrows House, Worcester  
Architect: Glancy Nicholls Architects



### Most Sustainable Project

London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London by Portview Fit-out  
Architect: Allies & Morrison



### Drylining residential

RPN, Block M Horlicks Development, Berkshire  
Architect: Symmetry Architecture



### Acoustic Excellence

HVN, London by Space Interior Systems  
Architect: zynk Design



To read more about the awards and the category winner's contracts visit:

[https://heyzine.com/flip-book/FIS\\_CONTRACTORS\\_AWARDS\\_2024](https://heyzine.com/flip-book/FIS_CONTRACTORS_AWARDS_2024)

# DRYLINING: MILESTONES AND CHALLENGES

David Crowson, speaks to **Andy Measom**, Managing Director at Measom Dryline, about achieving remarkable milestones and his expert perspective on the challenges within the drylining sector.



Andy Measom, Managing Director at Measom Dryline

When meeting Andy Measom, he remains very humble about his achievements and the contribution he has made, and continues to make, to our sector after 31 years at Measom Dryline. It is typical of the man to instead share his expert thoughts on the challenges faced by the drylining sector, how these can be addressed, and to celebrate Measom Dryline milestone of 90 years in the sector.

## Measom Dryline

Andy explained that the last 90 years have been a journey marked by resilience, innovation, and growth, commencing in 1934 when Fred Measom, Andy's grandfather, established a plastering and screeding business in Leicester. In the 1950s, Fred's son, Roger (Andy's father), identified the new technology of drywall and pioneered its adoption. Andy later joined the company in 1993.

Andy said: "As we step into 2024, we are proud to commence the celebration of our 90th anniversary. Throughout the year we will reflect on the past, cherish the present, and set our sights on a future filled with continued success".

## The Challenges

### Productivity

Andy explained that every year the drylining industry uses more than 4.2 million tonnes of plasterboard which has doubled since he joined the company in the 1990s and the industry has failed to take advantage of one of the oldest modern methods of construction used today - drylining, leading to wasted opportunities and a disjointed construction process.

Andy said: "Drylining has a very efficient delivery methodology and provides high performance in sound and robustness. Despite this, productivity levels are falling and we are probably working at around 30% of what was being produced in the 90s.

"What I have learned is that engaging and awarding packages earlier, leads to a more efficient way of working and also reduces labour shortages. We could see less package growth and net margins for main contractors and trade contractors could rise substantially".

He went on to explain that some industry leaders have demonstrated that by awarding the package a year in advance, everyone has time to plan, work within the budget, and resolve any design or sequencing issues before starting on-site. This means that the person building the walls is not fighting the service installation. Horizontal service routes through buildings can be planned like they are vertically, and builder's work holes can be repositioned, even if they are for future use.

This would allow work to be planned better and companies can assign operatives to work for longer durations and start thinking of weeks instead of days. This would also allow them to explore different ways of doing things such as utilising lighter and narrower boards so that operatives (regardless of gender) can complete more tasks in a day. This, in turn, will drive quality, ownership, and a sense of pride in the work, reducing supervision and preliminary ratios and allowing production and delivery to be planned.



**90 YEARS** BUILDING TOMORROW  
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### Labour shortages

Andy explained that the drylining industry is facing a decline in its workforce, with fewer operatives entering the trade compared to previous years and experienced workers soon to be leaving based on their age. With the Government demanding each year 300,000 houses, 40 super hospitals, and a myriad of new and refurbished buildings. He said: "We urgently need as mentioned early engagement, a more inclusive industry, apprentices and to raise awareness of drylining.

"At Measom's, we have focused on investing time and effort in refining our training programs and apprenticeships to build the next generation of dryliners. The apprenticeship offers hands-on training and experience, equipping young people regardless of ethnicity, race and gender with the necessary skills to contribute to the industry's workforce".

### Sustainability

Andy said: "With the demand for constructing numerous buildings each year, we must work more sustainably". He explained that vast amounts of plasterboard and other components within the process are discarded after use. Yes, some of this is recycled but a lot of drylining systems create waste by design. However, all it takes is a small technological advancement in the design and the process of end-of-life procedures to transform plasterboard into a reusable product. Remarkably, in the last twenty years, plasterboard has been sourced from waste products of coal-fired power stations, effectively increasing the circulation of gypsum without the need for additional mining.

Andy concluded by saying: "We are working with key suppliers, such as British Gypsum, to develop and test sustainable approaches and new ways of working, pioneering sustainability where we can".

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

## FIS launches updated Best Practice Drylining Guide

FIS has revised its Best Practice Guide - Installation of Drylining to take account of new working practices, the Building Safety Act, and sustainability. The publication promotes best practices in the installation of drylining and guides specifiers, contractors, clients, and installers through the design and installation of internal, non-loadbearing drylining constructions using gypsum plasterboard on rigid metal framework. It also includes descriptions of other non-plasterboard, such as calcium silicate board, which are also used in drylined systems. This guide includes drylined partitions, linings, and passive fire protection.

Split into sections, the guide covers everything from the initial tendering and planning stages to the eventual installation. It offers a series of points to consider

when carrying out the installation of all types of drywall and provides updated and revised information including the Top 10 risks to avoid when procuring and installing fire-resistant drylining, updated advice on contract conditions, removal of references

to BS 8212 due to withdrawal, coverage of changes to BS 8000-8: 2023, detailing the differences between skimming vs. taping and jointing and updated advice on sustainability.

The guide can be downloaded by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/a5dksbs9>



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### FIS Scottish Awards Lunch

voco Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow  
20 September



### Industry Day: Commercial Fit-Out

Hill Dickinson LLP, London  
15 October

### FIS AGM

Warwick University, West Midlands  
7 November

### FIS Training Awards Lunch

Plasterers Hall, London  
5 December

For further information of these events visit: [www.thefis.org/events](http://www.thefis.org/events)

## Pacy & Wheatley celebrates being named one of Yorkshire's fastest fifty!

Pacy & Wheatley has been named one of the 50 fastest-growing companies in Yorkshire by the Ward Hadaway Yorkshire Fastest 50 Awards. This prestigious award recognises the growth, innovation, and achievements of Yorkshire companies.

Based on financial data, the list ranks the top 50 independent companies that have consistently increased turnover over the past three years while remaining profitable. Pacy & Wheatley secured the 41st spot after a period of continuous growth. It was also placed 20th in the large companies' category.

Anthony Wheatley, Managing Director, expressed his appreciation for the award, highlighting the team's dedication. He said: "We are delighted to be recognised once again among Yorkshire's top 50 fastest-growing companies. This achievement is a testament to the hard work of our dedicated

staff across all four Group Divisions and, of course, our supply chain. Both have ensured we stay true to our core values and company practices while managing growth during challenging economic times."

[www.pacy-wheatley.co.uk](http://www.pacy-wheatley.co.uk)



## Changes at Knauf!

Knauf announced that it has undergone a worldwide rebrand to embrace what it as a global company stands for. The brand values are **trustworthy**, **hands-on** and **high performing** and across all Knauf divisions you will now be seeing some changes to their new brand identity. These include a modernised logo, which has been specifically designed for the digital age and to make their presence more recognisable, and the message, you can always **#BuildOnUs**.

### How does this affect me and my business?

If you're a customer of Knauf that features their logo within your own business, you can download the new logo by visiting:

<https://go.knauf.co.uk/logos>

If you require any further support with updating your assets contact [Fraser.Lee@knauf.com](mailto:Fraser.Lee@knauf.com)



## FIS creates new Building Safety Act e-learning course

FIS has launched a new online training course designed to introduce the basic concepts of the Building Safety Act and support individuals working in the finishes and interiors sector to understand the implications of these changes on them. Members have access to this course, which has been designed to be user-friendly and guide learners through the new compliance landscape. The course is divided into nine chapters:

1. An overview of the Building Safety Act 2022

2. What is a Higher Risk Building and when does work fall under the stricter regime?
3. An introduction to Gateways and new expectations
4. PEOPLE: Duty Holders and Competence Management Plans
5. PROCESS: Change Control and Mandatory Occurrence Reporting
6. PRODUCT: Safety Critical Products and Evidencing Performance
7. Managing the Golden Thread
8. Defective Premises Act and other Sanctions

9. Summary and Recommended Actions

The course includes an end test and FIS will issue certificates to those completing the course (and passing the test). Learners can learn at their own pace and FIS is on hand to answer any questions that arise.

Members can register for the course by visiting: [www.thefis.org/skills-hub/training-offers-for-members/fis-training-modules](https://www.thefis.org/skills-hub/training-offers-for-members/fis-training-modules)

## Raising awareness - Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training and public access defibrillators (PADs) will save lives

On 7 September 2023, Paul Latham, Strategy Director at Nevill Long suffered a sudden cardiac arrest. Thanks to the actions of his colleagues, who were trained in CPR and had access to a PAD, Paul survived. Now, he is using his harrowing experience to raise awareness of the importance of individuals having CPR training and access to PADs. Without these vital resources, Paul emphasises that he would not be here today.

Paul said: "Amazing approximately 60,000 people sustain an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) annually in the UK with less than 50% receiving any resuscitation. The statistics are shocking: In the UK those who suffer an OHCA have an eight percent chance of survival or to put it another way, a 92% chance of dying. "A study by The University of Warwick (Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Outcomes (OHCAO) Registry), states: 'The community in which the person sustains an OHCA influences the likelihood that they will receive bystander CPR (BCPR) and ultimately survive.' You could apply this logic to the work community well.

"The study also states: 'When a person has an OHCA their best chances of survival are when a bystander performs CPR and uses a public access defibrillator (PAD):

"Training in CPR and the use of PAD makes a difference in people's willingness to act. If we can act on this, then there is potential to increase survival rates."

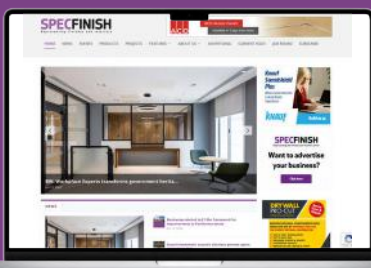
To watch the CPR and defibrillators: how to save a life film visit: <https://tinyurl.com/2sfy8fsd>

Paul's experience, along with these statistics, highlights the urgency for action. FIS would encourage all members to explore providing their employees with CPR training and investigate

purchasing and installing a PAD in a suitable location in your office or local community. To find out more information the British Heart Foundation website is an excellent place to start: <https://lnkd.in/eMDt-HZ9>



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# NO MORE CONFUSION

## CODE FOR CONSTRUCTION PRODUCT INFORMATION (CCPI)

The CCPI was formed following the Hackitt enquiry to improve standards. voestalpine Metsec are proud to be amongst the first recipients. CCPI is built around 5 'acid tests' product information must be:

- » Clear
- » Accurate
- » Up-to-date
- » Accessible
- » Unambiguous

Our commitment to providing specifiers, installers and users with clear, unambiguous information about products and their performance with the CCPI.

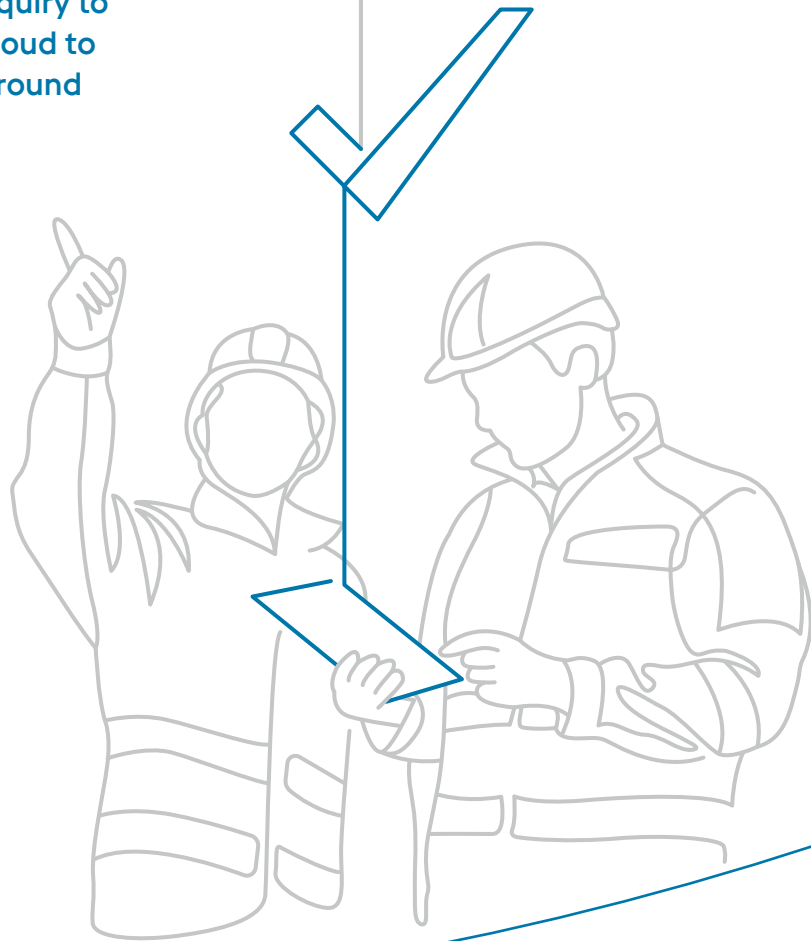
- » Prioritising building safety
- » Driving for higher standards
- » Providing confidence in the systems' capabilities and suitability for projects

### voestalpine Metsec's SFS Division

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### voestalpine Metsec's Dry Lining Division

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