

SPECFINISH

The magazine of FIS representing finishes and interiors



FIS Awards – Excellence on show

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FIS

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FRONT COVER:

Ornate Interiors did the double at the 2018 FIS Awards Lunch, taking Gold in the Heritage category for its redevelopment of the Grade II listed Oldham Town Hall, which was also named Project of the Year.

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Fit-out sector begins to slow after growth period

Annual growth levels in the interior fit-out and refurbishment market are starting to slow, according to new research from AMA. This comes on the back of a 34 per cent increase in the market since 2013 in value terms, including a 6 per cent rise in 2017.

The forecast annual slowdown in growth is being attributed to the uncertain state of the UK economy, a deferral of major investment decisions, cuts to public sector budgets and a continued scaling back of large construction programmes.

Output growth of recent years in fit-out and interior refurbishment has particularly been seen in the commercial offices, education and leisure and entertainment sectors, with many private sector clients choosing to commission interior refurbishment works rather than costlier and potentially more disruptive new build projects.

Ongoing shortages of Grade A office space have also contributed towards much of the recent market growth. In the public sector, reductions in capital spending programmes and the trend towards smaller but more suitable estate portfolios has led to increased interest in refurbishment in education and healthcare.

Commercial offices is the largest market for interior refurbishment and fit-out services – 27 per cent of value in 2017. Education is second largest with opportunities for fit-out and refurbishment work coming from student accommodation and learning and recreational facilities. Retail sector opportunities are expected to decline in the coming years.

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Culture of non-compliance alleged at Grenfell inquiry

The Grenfell Tower disaster inquiry has been told that there was evidence of non-compliant building design and installation in the tower, including more than 100 non-compliant fire doors, new windows and rainscreen cladding.

There was “a culture of non-compliance” at the tower, which contained more combustible material than previously thought, fire safety experts revealed. This included flammable parts to the window frames that spread the fire to the external cladding within 15 minutes of the first 999 call from a householder on the fourth floor whose fridge freezer appeared to be alight.

The rainscreen cladding installed during the tower’s refurbishment in 2016 came in for scrutiny. Analysis by Arup found it was not compliant with Building Regulations at the time it was installed. Of particular concern was the use of a polyethylene (PE) filler in the aluminium cladding screen. Analysis also found vertical and horizontal fire-stopping in the cladding cavities had been installed, but had been done so incorrectly.

Dame Judith Hackitt’s Independent Review into Building Regulations and Fire Safety, commissioned by government following the fire and published as a final report on 17 May, highlighted a lack of evidence that what was being installed was, in fact, compliant and a lack of competency in the industry.

FIS appoints Iain McIlwee as chief executive

Iain McIlwee has been appointed as the new chief executive of FIS.

He will be responsible for the development and implementation of the Association’s long- and short-term strategies to the benefit of members and industry, maintaining high-profile representation and lobbying with key stakeholders, both outside and within the membership.

Mr McIlwee began his career as an engineering analyst before moving on to trade bodies in 1996. He has held the position of chief executive officer of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) since 2011, where he implemented strategies that saw membership grow by 40 per cent and retention levels reach an all-time high. He is currently serving his second year as vice chairman of the Construction Products Association.

Speaking about his new role, Mr McIlwee said: “It is an exciting time to be joining FIS. I am looking forward to meeting members and working with the FIS Board to represent the fit-out sector during a challenging period of change within the construction industry.”

He takes up the role full time from 1 October. During September, his time will be split between FIS and BWF.



FIND OUT MORE
www.thefis.org

FIND OUT MORE
 Turn to page 10: Building a safer future

Second reading of Aldous Bill pushed back to autumn

The second reading of the Construction (Retention Deposit Schemes) Bill, known as the Aldous Bill, has been delayed for the second time.

The Bill, which is seeking to protect cash retentions by ring fencing them in a separate protected bank account, was due for its second reading last month, but it has been re-scheduled for October. The Aldous Bill stipulates that, unless the monies are protected, any clause in a construction contract enabling the deduction of cash retentions will be invalid. The Bill will apply to the whole of the UK.

The Federation of Master Builders (FMB) and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) are both in support, and the Bill has support from more than 150 MPs. However, some trade associations have clashed on the subject; Build UK, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association and the Construction Products Association have all come out against supporting the Bill. For Build UK, the move made was against the wishes of some of some of its largest members, including BESA, ECA and FIS, who are all in support.

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Plasterers' Company partners with the Prince's Foundation

The Plasterers' Livery Company, through its Charitable Trust, will be supporting a student on the Prince's Foundation's Building Craft Programme each year for the next three years.

Esme Walker (pictured), a 27-year-old plasterer from Skelmersdale, in Lancashire, is the first student to benefit from this support.

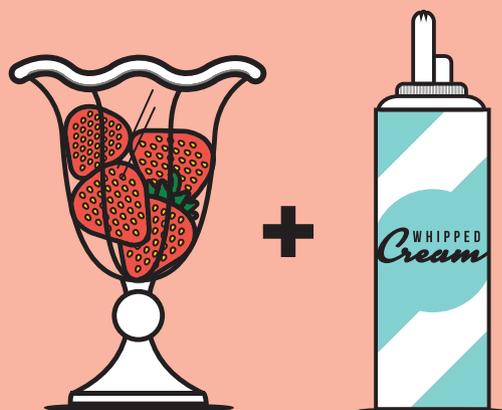
Designed for craftspeople looking to bridge the gap between basic qualifications and becoming a master craftsman working in the heritage sector, the successful programme includes placements with specialist organisations.

Peter Baker, chairman of the Plasterers' Charity, said: "We are delighted that the generosity of our members has made this possible. We are particularly pleased that two specific Bursaries established to enhance Heritage skills in plastering (the John N Robinson Bursary and the Spurling Bursary) have enabled us to make this three-year commitment."

FIND OUT MORE www.plastererslivery.co.uk

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Editor's column

A talented future

The Grenfell Tower disaster inquiry was told that there was evidence of non-compliant building design and installation in the tower. Even the Hackitt Report slammed the construction sector for its race-to-the-bottom culture. Both identified ignorance of regulations and guidance, a motivation to do things as quickly and cheaply as possible, lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities, and inadequate regulation as the key issues for construction to consider.

What has become clear is that there is insufficient focus on delivering the best quality building possible. The FIS initiative Product Process People (see page 10) is a very welcome step forward. We should not underestimate the complexity of the challenges facing construction, but compliance, competence and culture must focus on building a safer future and here is a very good place to start a new way of thinking that tackles some of the failings of the past.

And skills are at the very centre of this future. During the last 12 months, there has been a regular flow of initiatives to bring new entrants into the market and fill the skills gap and the very latest campaign is featured in this issue (see page 20). There are many reasons why there is not a steady supply of skilled new labour; we can talk about the industry not being attractive or just pure apathy, but we are the masters of our own future destiny.

You need the right talent to build success and, as Raj Manak at Stanmore told *SpecFinish* in an exclusive interview (see page 12), to provide the best service, you need the best talent around. Service quality has been at the heart of Stanmore's success and its talent pool is the envy of its peers. To succeed, you need to develop your talent into a powerful resource that can boost performance and profits.

Talented people are the essential ingredient and they can come from many different environments. So, the celebration of excellence last month was a welcome reminder of the talent that exists in the finishes and interiors sector. The FIS Contractors Awards reward outstanding performance (turn to page 15). Clearly there is a pool of talent that is compliant and has the right culture.

Adrian JG Marsh
Editor

Working together

It was a pleasure to host our FIS Awards Lunch – my first as FIS president – at the Dorchester last month and to welcome our guests, President of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industry (AWCI) Ed Sellers, executive vice president and CEO Steve Etkin, and board member Alfons-Jean Knauf.

An event such as this is a time for our sector to come together, to meet with our clients and suppliers, and to talk with like-minded professionals. The Awards Lunch provided a chance to celebrate what excellence looks like in our sector and an opportunity to acknowledge individuals and organisations who make a difference and enhance our businesses and our lives.

It also provided an opportunity for me as President to update our sector on some of the key strategic developments taking place at FIS.

Our current strategy sits under three banners of Skills, Technical and Community and is developing very well.

The bold decision to invest in our Skills team has reaped huge rewards, resulting in a substantial funding partnership being agreed with CITB earlier this year. This will enable us to drive the skills agenda and help address the lack of qualified tradespeople working and the numbers of new entrants entering our sector.

Our technical projects and initiatives are also raising the profile of FIS. A cultural change is coming, brought about by the tragic events at Grenfell Tower. We welcome Dame Judith Hackitt's report as this reflects the same values as FIS, raising standards and ensuring the quality and traceability of systems and installations.

In particular, her comments resonate that the sector needs to ensure that compliance is not a maximum to aim for but a minimum to be exceeded. And also that industry needs to do more to provide clear evidence that installations are compliantly installed



as systems, by fully trained and competent operatives. We have responded to the report on our members' behalf and hope to meet with her soon.

Our third strategic pillar is Community. FIS provides a platform for our sector's members and stakeholders to come together to share ideas and knowledge, whether face to face at events or through social media, technical meetings and other forums. These activities and opportunities to meet and engage are valued by us all, and so the FIS team continues to develop ideas and seek improvements to create the right forums and events to enable our sector to network and get value from their community.

The lunch also saw us say goodbye to our chief executive, David Frise. David joined us in 2010, where he set about raising the profile of the association and seeking to drive change within our industry. He was instrumental in overseeing the successful merger of AIS and FPDC in 2014 and rebranding both organisations to become FIS the following year.

Since that date, FIS has gone from strength to strength, becoming a recognised force within the fit-out sector. We would certainly not be where we are today without his foresight, guidance and leadership and we wish him every success in his new role as chief executive of the Building Engineering Services Association.

And, so begins a new chapter for FIS. I am delighted to announce that Iain McIlwee (see page 2) has been appointed as the new chief executive of FIS. The FIS Board, staff team and I very much look forward to working with Iain over the coming years.

As the saying goes: the king is dead, long live the king!

ANDREW SMITH, FIS PRESIDENT
OWA (UK), Joint managing director
Sales & Marketing

Energy-efficient buildings: what's the answer?

Janeeth Devgun, CCF's insulation and external category manager, considers what the government's recent pledge to halve the energy use of new buildings by 2030 through 'modern construction practices' really means for the building industry.

When Prime Minister Theresa May spoke about the government's Industrial Strategy at The University of Manchester's Jodrell Bank, one of the subjects tackled was energy efficiency in buildings. Mrs May mentioned that "In the clean growth grand challenge, we will use new technologies and modern construction practices to at least halve the energy usage of new buildings by 2030". This bold

statement is a welcome one, but with just 12 years to go to reach such an ambitious target, how will it work?

The answer is that the UK certainly has the means to access and specify quality products in order to produce highly efficient buildings. For example, innovations in building fabric products such as insulation, and modern membrane solutions designed to adapt to

changes in climate, are making it even more intuitive and effective to minimise heat loss and keep a property at the ideal temperature for occupants.

It is important that buildings are built with efficiency and air tightness in mind, and where possible should exceed the minimum building standard energy efficiency requirements. The building fabric, after all, is the

foundation for efficiency, and the more energy efficient it is, the less reliance there will be on energy consumption in buildings. This is key, as like the PM mentioned: "Heating and powering buildings accounts for 40 per cent of our total energy usage".

We know that the UK has previously tried, and subsequently scrapped, energy efficiency building policies. Taking this into account, it is clear that the construction and energy industries now require a clear and consistent approach, backed by government, in order to reach these targets. Policy will inform change, both for construction practices and to help people to be able to access and use greener energy sources more affordably.

JANEETH DEVGUN

Insulation and external category manager, CCF
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CMS Danskin Acoustics has enhanced its SuperPhon range of reverberation-control solutions to include a patented (GB2550373A) sound-absorbing impact-resistant laminate in a choice of high-impact systems.

SuperPhon High Impact wall panels provide an attractive solution where aesthetics are a design priority, while SuperPhon Active delivers access to an impact-resistant yet affordable specification.

The impact performance of SuperPhon High Impact and SuperPhon Active has been tested by the UKAS-accredited CST Global Centre for Sports Technology and certified to BS EN 13964 for Classes A, B and C.

Available in 25mm, 40mm and 50mm thicknesses and a maximum panel size of 3000 x 1200mm, SuperPhon High Impact can achieve up to Class A acoustic absorption.

Two standard fabric coverings giving 77 colour choices are available within the SuperPhon range, providing Class 1 fire performance, with Class 0 available on request.

www.cmsdanskin.co.uk



CCF puts completely customer-focused initiatives first

Insulation and interior building products distributor CCF has announced details of a national service training initiative for all staff alongside an improved website, highlighting that the online resource and training will further develop its customer service through improved access to technical expertise, sales support and account management solutions.

The customer-focused training initiative is being led by CCF's external sales team and training specialists to upskill staff at every level, with an emphasis on helping colleagues ensure that customers get the most out of every visit, call or meeting with CCF.

An enhanced CCF website provides users with new online trade account management features enabling customers to view their credit limit and account balance, download statements and pay invoices. Updates also include product listings and basket-building functionality for improved navigation.

CCF has also shown commitment to maintaining quality customer service through certification to the ISO 9001 standard.

www.ccfld.co.uk

Minster announces new distribution agreement with Armstrong

Specialist interior solutions distributor Minster has joined forces with Armstrong Ceiling Solutions in a move that sees Minster become Armstrong's first new distribution channel in the UK for over 25 years.

Through this new partnership, Minster now offers the full range of Armstrong ceiling tiles and suspension systems for commercial projects, providing its interior fit-out customers with high-performance, innovative ceiling solutions designed to enhance comfort, save time and create beautiful spaces.

These innovative solutions are supported by Minster's customer-focused service provided by friendly experts who work hard to deliver the best possible experience and high standards of expertise and advice.

Reece Bailes, Minster's sales director, said: "With Minster becoming Armstrong's first new UK distribution channel in over 25 years, we're very excited at what this means for our loyal customers."

Minster stocks a comprehensive range of drylining, acoustic, thermal, fire protection, ceiling, roofing and external facade products through its branch network.

See Minster's website for details of Armstrong products and a competition.

www.minsteronline.co.uk/armstrong

Further expansion for EOS Facades

EOS Facades has announced the continuation of its expansion programme with a major extension to the company's advanced off-site manufacturing facility and the development of a new fabrication plant.

In addition to the five Howick steel framing machines currently in operation, EOS has invested in a new multi-width (boxer) machine and installed overhead cranes for lifting and moving frames and steel coils around the extended facility, in preparation for increased workload with the development of a complete walling solution and load-bearing panelised system to support off-site initiatives.

The company's existing range of 65/100/150/200/250mm deep sections in gauge thicknesses from 1.2 to 2mm will be increased; the multi-width machine enables the production of U-Track sections ranging from 65 to 254mm, in thicknesses from 1 to 3mm, with capability to run all slotted head track profiles.

The EOS technical team and the Etex Building Performance specification team run free-to-attend CPD Factory Tours at the County Durham facility. The next is on 20 September – email Hannah Jones to register interest (eos@insideoffsite.co.uk).

www.eos-facades.co.uk



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Drylining is an art that creates walls and rooms in a building, forms space for insulation and smooths out uneven surfaces during renovation work. Experience and skill goes a long way to achieving a neat and professional finish, and Wondertex products are designed to enhance the results.

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The prem finish plasterboard finishing compound is suitable for the finishing of all plasterboard joints. Easy to apply, it provides a seamless feathered finish for professional overpainting.

The Wondertex drylining range also includes three specialist tapes: for creating robust corner joints, for reinforcing joints and angles, and for plasterboard crack and hole repairs.

www.wondertex.co.uk



Taylor Hart brings mobile plasterboard cutting machine to UK

FIS contractor member Taylor Hart has invested in innovative machinery to pre-cut and mitre plasterboard on-site.

Taylor Hart has teamed up with German machine manufacturer Flextos to be the sole UK and Ireland distributor. This type of plasterboard cutting machinery is used worldwide, mostly in the US, but is currently little used by specialist drywall contractors in the UK. The portable Flextos machine is used on-site to cut deflection heads, pattresses, partition corners, multiple-sided bulkheads, blind boxes, and column encasements – both flat and curved.

In addition to quicker installation times, the many benefits include improved quality of a machine-cut board, reduction of waste by controlling the cutting schedule, and promotion of safety through reduced on-site use of utility knives/blades. Flextos also reduces dust creation on-site thanks to its double vac filtration system which eliminates around 98 per cent of the dust created.

www.taylorhart.co.uk / www.flextos.com/en



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Building a safer future

FIS technical director **Joe Cilia** considers the key points from the review into Building Regulations and Fire Safety commissioned by government following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower last year.

Dame Judith Hackitt’s final report, *Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety*, was published on 17 May. We had already been given a direction of travel with the interim report. It highlighted that there was a lack of evidence that what was being installed was, in fact, compliant and that there was a lack of competency in the industry. Dame Hackitt had also said that product labelling was, in some cases, lacking and misleading.

The full report, which is aimed at higher risk residential buildings (referred to as HRRBs within the report) but does not rule out other buildings where there is residency, such as hospitals and care homes, aims to address the process to provide an outcomes-based solution rather than a prescriptive one. This approach caused much consternation in the media when the report was published because combustible materials were not singled out and banned for use as a cladding material, yet if the recommendations were in place during the refurbishment of the tower, the cladding used would not have passed.

Fifty-three recommendations are listed in the report, broken into 10 chapters, which include 2) Design, construction and refurbishment, 5) Competence, 7) Products and 8) Golden thread of building information, where I believe the greatest impacts in our sector will be seen.

The report highlights that the responsibility for building safety is often passed down to the sub-contract level. This is where changes driven through ‘value engineering’ – described in the report as “a systematic and

organised approach to providing the necessary functions in a project at the lowest cost” and “promoting the substitution of materials and methods with less expensive alternatives” – often go undocumented in what some have termed a ‘build and design’ culture. The report recommends that permission to proceed with a project will only be granted when evidence is submitted through a series of ‘Gateways’ that the build will meet all the requirements of the Building Regulations.

Competence of everyone involved in the design, procurement, delivery and maintenance of the building is a key recommendation. Defining levels of competency for each of these disciplines will be challenging and will require cooperation across the sector to ensure they can be defined, evidenced and the correct training put in place over a transition period that is workable against a background of a skills shortage.

The recommendation for clear, permanent and transparent labelling of products should start to address confusing wording, such as ‘fire proof’ or ‘fire resistant’, that is used without clearly explaining the parameters within which the product can be used. It will also drive manufacturers to provide clear and complete test evidence which includes details of the test, its results, configurations, parameters and installation details, rather than some single-page statements put out with scant information, leaving contractors vulnerable when challenged to provide evidence of compliancy.

“The golden thread of building information” was alluded to as a key initiative in the interim report,

and here in the final report it becomes key to providing evidence of compliancy and provides building owners and operators with clear information about the asset, how to maintain it and how to make safe changes if required. In a similar way to the processes described in PAS 1192 parts 2 and 3, it will use digital files and data, which are searchable and usable.

To meet the recommendations will require a change in culture where ‘good enough is not good

enough anymore’. Specifications will have to be more detailed, tenders clear and unambiguous, the procurement process transparent with changes recorded and justified, product data and evidence of test reports submitted and evidence that products are correctly installed, especially where materials cover up the substantive elements such as studs or service penetrations. And, lastly, the need for a fully carded and trained to a recognised standard team to deliver these buildings.

FIND OUT MORE

JOE CILIA

FIS technical director
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PRODUCT

PROCESS

PEOPLE

Product Process People

Since the fire at Grenfell Tower and the interim report, FIS has been working with its members to address the issues of providing clear digital evidence of compliance and competence through an initiative called Product Process People (PPP). This is a process to evidence compliance by saving copies of test reports, product delivery notes and site images to show correct installation. Together with copies of the operatives’ CSCS cards with relevant training recorded in the same file, this will provide current evidence of competency.

The PPP initiative was presented to a wider meeting of members at the end of June and included a practical demonstration, showing that the process is not reliant on a single platform.

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A diamond achievement: Stanmore at 60



It's not the oldest but it has certainly blossomed from a couple of plasterers plying their trade in North London to become a dynamic and innovative business. Today, Stanmore combines a range of inter-related services to work not just as a traditional subcontractor but increasingly as a prime contractor for building envelope and interior works. **Adrian JG Marsh** met Raj Manak to find out more about a business celebrating its diamond anniversary.

"Try to be the best at whatever you do, and work hard to achieve it" is the advice Raj Manak, the 52-year-old managing director and owner of the Stanmore group of companies, would give to any aspiring 20-year-old planning their career.

Raj's vision has transformed a traditional plastering and drylining contractor into a multi-skilled specialist with a range of services embracing interiors, architectural metal work, glazing, and building envelope engineering and construction. In 2017, sales were in excess of £120 million and margin at a level that tier 1 contractors only dream of.

Stanmore through the years

Back in 1958, Leo Tuohey set up Plastering Contractors Stanmore, in Stanmore, Middlesex. The business took advantage of the boom in housebuilding and worked across London, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, gaining a reputation for reliability and quality. George Wimpey was then a key client and today, as Taylor Wimpey, it remains a Stanmore client.

Leo wanted to retire in 1979 and sold the business to a management team. By the late 1980s, Don Leavey and Chris Brown were running Stanmore from its new home in South East London. While work expanded, housing work was the real engine for growth. Turnover was around £3 million a year.

In 1989, a young Raj Manak entered the construction industry as a labourer and then worked as a plasterer for his father, a subcontractor. The father-and-son duo began working for Stanmore in 1991. At the same time, Raj was studying for a Civil Engineering ONC at Erith College on day release, pursuing his ambition to become an engineer.

The business grew to around £4 million in the mid-1990s and Chris finally persuaded Raj to move from the tools and become a supervisor and manager. He had identified how Raj shone with attention to detail and a grasp of time, cost and quality. On completion of the ONC, Raj began a Quantity Surveying degree at the University



Stanmore is providing facade finishes, drylining, ceiling and screeding packages at the Elephant Park regeneration project in London.

of Greenwich as he progressed to contracts manager. He worked his way through all parts of the company, becoming construction director on completion of his degree in 1997.

Raj recalls his early management career. "I always liked systems to monitor and control costs, and when combined with my trade experience we developed ways to improve efficiency and profitability," he said. "I was running all the construction when I was offered a chance to buy into the business. It was a lot of money for me at the time, but I was always confident that this business had the capability to do a lot more.

"The economy was growing and there was a lot of work available, but I always wanted to make sure that we didn't just concentrate on plastering and that we expanded into other related areas, at first into insulated renders, metal stud partitions and SFS," Raj added.

By the turn of the century, turnover was up to £7 million with clients including Wimpey, Lovell, Berkeley and Laing Homes. Stanmore also carried out commercial work on colleges, offices

and hospitals. At the same time as Chris planned for retirement, Raj became managing director and acquired more of the business, finally taking full control when Don retired in 2006. By then, annual turnover had reached around £30 million.

Growing with the business

Staff retention has been high thanks in part to the management and engineering team at Stanmore constantly having new challenges presented to them. Stanmore's move into full-scale facades, window installation and architectural metal work has provided individuals with the opportunity to develop and grow with the business.

Raj commented: "If you want to add value to people and to the industry, you should be able to provide a very good service, and to do that, you need a lot of talent within your business. You must also be able to put a lot of packages in your offer (to clients). That way, you make it easy for clients to deal with just one person rather than with six or seven.

"Having multi-related packages in our business, plus a pool of very talented people,

allows us to have the best service in the industry. If you stand still, you might go backwards, and we want to keep moving forward to attract talent and grow the business with the right people. Nobody has to leave Stanmore to progress their career.”

Moving into facades and metal work in the noughties took Stanmore to a new level: it was a seminal period. Stanmore’s senior team stopped thinking like a reactive subcontractor and started to look ahead, planning more like a manufacturer and taking a proactive leading specialist role.

Management control procedures and techniques have developed from the techniques Raj created during the 1990s. These ensure that jobs are estimated carefully, planned in detail from tender, through construction and onto final account.

Raj highlights the importance of technology. He explained: “We’re working on some 150 sites and we can find out what’s happening on any job at the touch of a button. We manage each contract carefully, which means we avoid shocks, both for us and our clients.”

Close-working team

Stanmore’s fortnightly contracts meetings are legendary and allow the whole team to share experiences, but they also serve to keep Raj close to his staff so that everyone remains focused on contract objectives.

“I still know 95 per cent of the people who work here,” said Raj. “Most of my senior team have grown with the business. We don’t hire and fire – if we make a mistake, we find ways to correct it, and we learn from it. We also learn from others.”

Raj is clearly passionate about his business, and his ambition is as strong as ever. He said: “I’d seen how professional main contractor clients had been, trying new ways of working to get better and become more competitive. I wanted us to be as professional as any main contractor or housebuilder.

“To take full control of our work packages, we had to manage safety and quality to a high standard; if we did that, we’d stand out above other subcontractors.”

At 60 years old, Stanmore is now on the cusp of its next stage of sustainable growth. It is putting in place a new group structure that meets the changing needs of the market. Drylining, facades, glazing and metal work businesses are being joined by a unitised facades team and a modular construction operation.

“We’re now growing outside of London. We’ve set up operations in Swindon to cover the M4 corridor and in Manchester to work with customers in the North West. And we’re now looking at a Midlands base,” Raj concluded.

Does it work? Well, let the numbers speak; in just one month during the spring, Stanmore



Raj Manak, managing director, Stanmore.

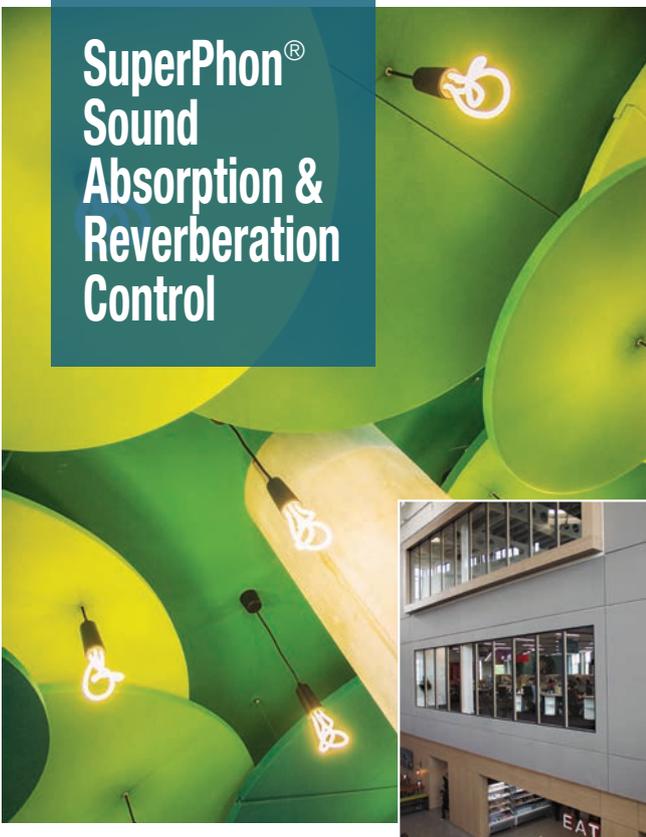
secured £28 million of new business, including its first new unitised facades appointment at Wood Wharf in Canary Wharf.

Without doubt, people are the real sparkle that has made Stanmore a true diamond at 60 – and it’s not stopping there. The next target is to become a £200-million business by 2023.



Drylining, ceiling, screeding, facades and metal work have featured at Vauxhall in South London.

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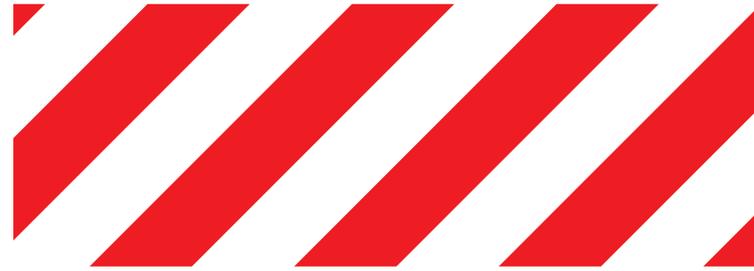


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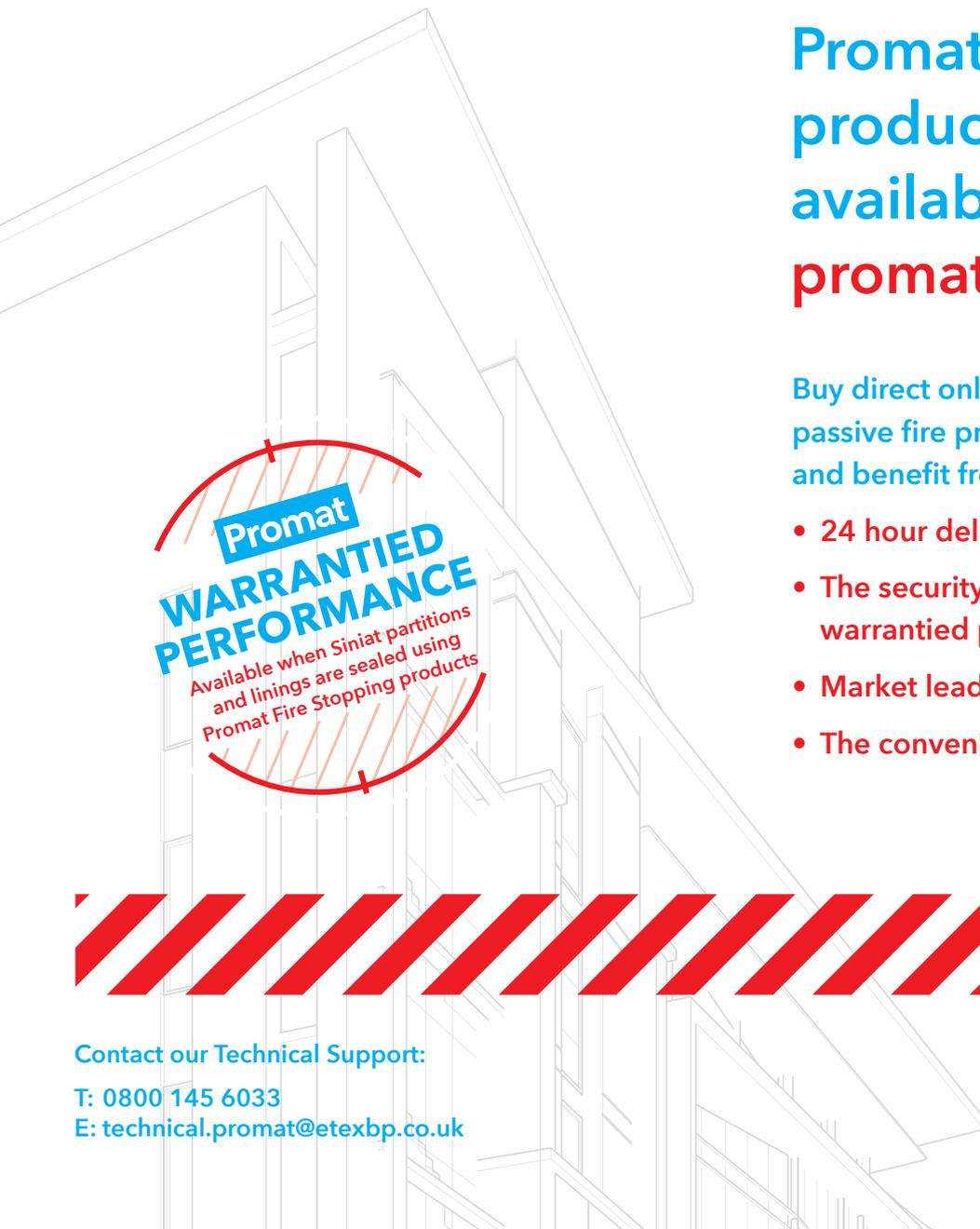
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Coming together as a sector

Celebrating excellence in the finishes and interiors sector was at the centre of the **2018 FIS Awards Lunch**, held at The Dorchester Hotel on 5 June and attended by more than 450 construction industry leaders, sponsors and FIS members.

As the biggest and most glamorous of the four major events hosted by FIS each year, the Awards Lunch provides an opportunity to celebrate what excellence looks like in the sector and for professionals to come together and share ideas and knowledge as one like-minded community.

FIS President Andrew Smith updated on the Association's developing strategy and highlighted how the bold decision to invest in its Skills team has enabled a substantial funding partnership agreed with CITB, and how the many Technical projects and initiatives are also raising the profile of FIS.

Prior to the lunch and presentation of the prestigious FIS Awards, Mr Smith thanked outgoing FIS chief executive David Frise for his foresight, guidance and leadership and overall contribution to the sector.

Read on for details of the category winners...



After-dinner speaker Miles Jupp.



FIS President Andrew Smith.



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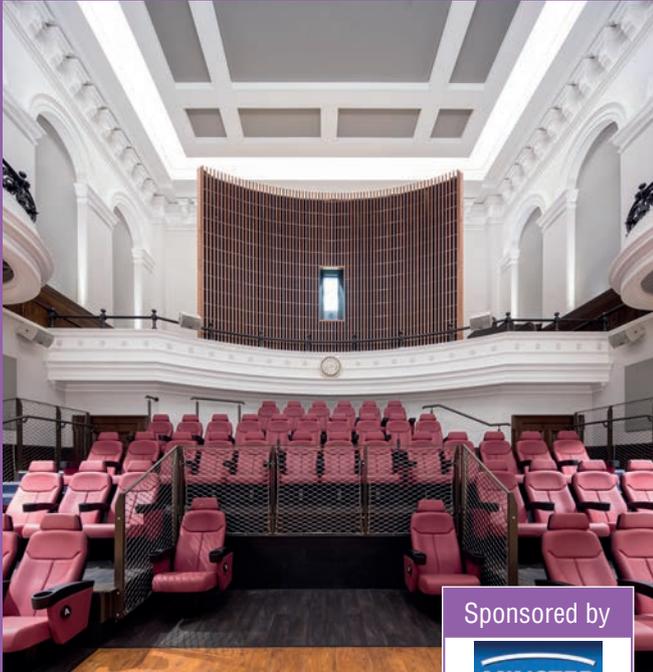
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FIS AWARDS LUNCH 2018

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PROJECT PKF Cooper Parry, Solihull



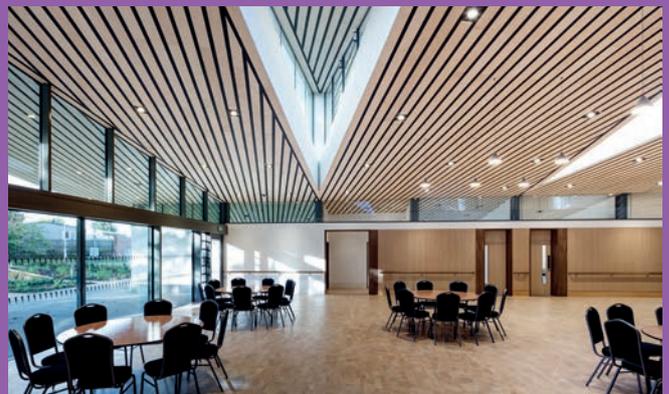
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ARCHITECT Stride Treglown



HERITAGE



GOLD Ornate Interiors

PROJECT Oldham Town Hall Redevelopment, Lancashire
ARCHITECT BDP (Architects) Manchester

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PROJECT Piccadilly Theatre Dome
Ceiling, London

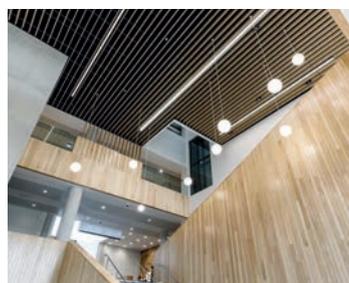
DRYWALL CONSTRUCTION - COMMERCIAL



GOLD Stortford Interiors (UK)

PROJECT Which, London
ARCHITECT KPF

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SILVER Mansell Finishes

PROJECT Birmingham
Conservatoire, West Midlands
ARCHITECT Feilden Clegg
Bradley Studios

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GOLD Measom Dryline

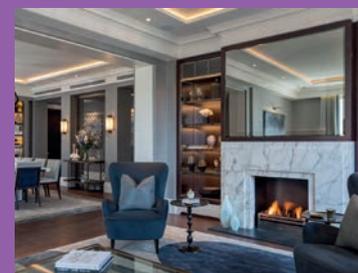
PROJECT Rathbone Square, London
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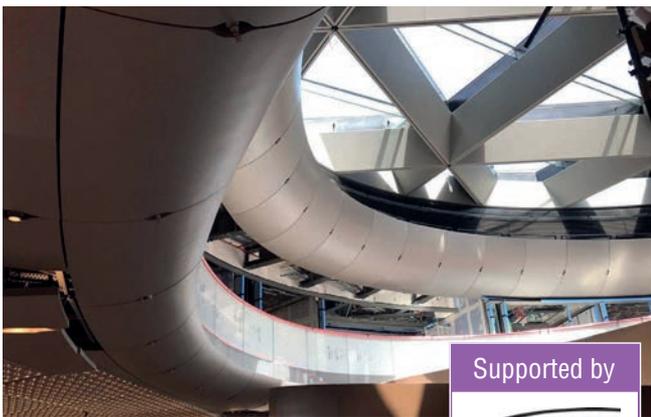


SILVER Stortford Interiors (UK)

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ARCHITECT Allford Hall Monaghan Morris



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For course dates and further information, contact the British Gypsum Technical Academy Team on 0844 561 8810 or email technical.academy@saint-gobain.com quoting SpecFinish with your enquiry.





Simplifying work experience in construction

FIS has launched the second project within Fit-Out Futures, which aims to bring a sustainable 1,500 new entrants into the sector every year by 2020.

FIS Skills' Further Education to Employment programme will focus on engaging students to be the next generation of construction employees. The aim is to attract 352 candidates to undertake four weeks of work experience with an employer over a two-year period.

Statistics show that if all college students studying construction ended up in a relevant occupation to their course, there would be NO skills shortage in construction. How can FIS help make this a reality? It seems such a simple solution, but, as always where skills and training are concerned, it's seen as a complex set of problems that result in a mountain that employers, particularly SMEs, find too hard to climb.

Most employers raise concerns that college-leavers are not 'site ready': students have never been near a site and, therefore, aren't aware of the reality of what happens on-site and don't understand how to navigate a day undertaking their chosen trade. Another issue is that health and safety might have only been covered at the minimum level rather than to the high standards often expected on tier 1 commercial sites.

By providing work experience during the course duration, students will be able to be confident in their first day of actual employment. Work experience provision for an employer, however, can be a nightmare – all those rules and regulations, safety issues, insurance, and then there is the question of what employers actually get them to do.

FIS is working with the approved college network and experts to simplify the process and guide employers through the students' period at college to ensure that both parties find this an enjoyable and useful process. The intention is for many of these students to be employed by FIS members – it's like an extended interview process, ensuring the right students end up in the right jobs.

FIND OUT MORE
skills@thefis.org

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Solve your biggest health and safety problems



Every business faces health and safety challenges, but how do you solve them?

Complete risk assessments

Health and safety risk assessments are not just an administrative exercise. They are a genuine opportunity to identify and fix issues that could cause injury, illness or worse. Regularly assess every activity on-site, and document risks and solutions that keep employees and the public safe. Risk assessments must be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain valid, particularly if site conditions or circumstances have changed.

Audit/assess equipment and PPE

The equipment your employees use is designed to protect them, if kept in good condition. Regularly check all tools and equipment to ensure they are in good working order and that all provided safeguards are in place. The same is true of PPE: Do dust masks fit properly? Are all employees wearing steel toe caps? Cease using any equipment found to be unsafe immediately.

Train employees properly

Your employees are at the greatest risk of injury, but also best placed to protect themselves. The key is to train them: give them the tools and knowledge to use equipment properly and respond to risks appropriately. As with risk assessments, training is not a one-off. Employees need to be trained regularly and kept up-to-date with new developments and emerging best practices. Even regular, informal tool talks will be helpful for raising standards on-site.

Get help

Your business has a responsibility for maintaining health and safety standards, but that doesn't mean the process is easy. If in doubt, seek assistance from a health and safety expert.

FIND OUT MORE
www.veritas-consulting.co.uk

Sector Hot Topic: payment notices

It has become clear over the past 12 months on the FIS Legal Helpline that the main cause of disputes, unsurprisingly, is payment. **Helen Coxon**, a chartered legal executive with Womble Bond Dickinson, takes a brief look at payment notices under the JCT suite of contracts and the key issues to be aware of.

If an agreement is a construction contract, then the Construction Act (Act) imposes mandatory requirements for payment. Fair payment practices introduced procedures to ensure transparency and the right to payment by instalments to the main supply chain members within 30 days. These payment provisions have been integrated into JCT contracts.

In a recent decision, the court ruled that a payment schedule agreed between the parties which provided for interim payments to be calculated up to the date for completion satisfied

the requirements of the Act. The project overran and the payment schedule made no allowance should the date for completion be missed. It was held that the contractor was not entitled to any further payments and would have to wait for the final date for payment as defined in the JCT Contract Conditions.

This case shows that any hybrid payment regime that departs from the usual contract position must clearly state what happens if the project overruns. It was clear that the payment schedule had been drawn up without looking at

the implications of the contract itself.

Risks

Be aware of employer amendments to payment terms in the main contract – any amendments will flow down to subcontractors.

JCT DB16 has introduced the Interim Valuation Date – this is the nearest business day each month and will change month on month. Ensure the dates are re-calculated each month. Take care in drafting payment or pay less notices – are the calculations clear?

To ensure good cash flow throughout a project, consider the following:

- Be clear on the terms of the contract and the requirements of the Act.
- Strive to reach clear and certain agreements at the outset.
- Ensure any payment schedule is consistent with the contract.

FIS members requiring assistance on this topic can contact Philippa Jones through the FIS Legal Helpline.

FIND OUT MORE

helen.coxon@wbd-uk.com
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Calendar of events



FIS Scottish Awards Lunch 2018
Trades Hall of Glasgow
28 September 2018

FIS Conference 2018
Worsley Park Marriott Hotel and
Country Club, Manchester
1 November 2018

Members' Meetings 2018
See www.thefis.org/events

Welcome to new FIS members

Pirin Projects
0208 4435511

Proserv completion for Great Yarmouth Ceilings

Great Yarmouth Ceilings is celebrating the completion of a landmark project for main contractor Morgan Sindall.

The development of a new East Anglian base for global energy services company Proserv saw Great Yarmouth Ceilings play a key role in the £7 million project, which involved the creation of a 65,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art office and warehouse building in Norfolk.

Works included all drylining, stud partitions, MF ceilings, glazed screens and suspended ceilings, as well as fire barriers and plastering. Komfort Sonik full-height double-glazed doors were used to meet the requirements of an upgrade of the first-floor meeting room to a double-glazed system.

Senior contracts manager Darren Adams said: "We were on-site for just five months. For a contract of that size, it was quite an achievement to turn the job around in such a short time.

"Our labour provision was spot on and our project management experience was instrumental in making it happen."

FIND OUT MORE www.greatyarmouthceilings.co.uk

Instarmac recognised as a Great Place to Work!

Instarmac Group plc, home to brands including Wondertex and UltraTileFix, has officially been named a 'Great Place to Work'.

In partnership with the *Guardian* and *Sunday Telegraph*, Great Place to Work is recognised worldwide and celebrates trust and engagement within an organisation. Instarmac was just one of 66 organisations in the UK to be recognised out of hundreds of entrants, placed 18th for medium-sized companies.

Every Instarmac employee had the opportunity to complete the Great Place to Work Trust Index survey, which consists of 58 core statements and assesses an employee's experience of the workplace.

Instarmac's managing director, John Holcroft, commented: "This is only our second year entering these awards and 18th place is a huge achievement for every member of the Instarmac team.

"We will continue to work hard to ensure that Instarmac remains a successful, happy and great place to work."

FIND OUT MORE www.instarmac.co.uk



Image credit: Gareth Gardener

BW: Workplace Experts' pro-bono collaboration on Your Space

BW: Workplace Experts has delivered the fit-out for Your Space as part of a pro-bono team with Gensler and LBA for the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust (SLCT), which celebrates 20 years since inception.

The successful delivery of Your Space – an evolution of the design of the Stephen Lawrence Centre in Deptford, London – is the result of close collaboration with SLCT, the global architecture firm Gensler and branding agency LBA, all of which donated time and expertise.

The new space represents progression, aiding the Trust in its vision to grow its work and secure Stephen's legacy. Embracing natural daylight, connectivity and the need for collaboration, the design is an evolution of the enduring emotional response the centre evokes. With an open and bright interior concept, the new co-working hub is a manifestation of the emotional and physical healing process that the Trust represents.

BW managed 48 subcontractors and 34 suppliers throughout the project, all of whom committed time and money.

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www.wearebw.com

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Ted Mansell

The founder of Mansell Finishes and one of the North West's construction personalities, Ted Mansell, has died peacefully in hospital at the age of 67.

A trained quantity surveyor, Ted was a charismatic figure from the red side of Manchester who established his first plastering business in 1983. Work evolved during the following decade and led to him creating Mansell Finishes as a specialist finishing contractor in 1992.

The new business gathered pace and was responsible for various packages, working on some high-profile contracts, including rebuilding Withington Hospital and the new extension to Chetham's School of Music in the centre of Manchester. Both contracts had close links to Ted. He had won a scholarship to Chetham School in his teens and when training as a QS with Marples Ridgeway he worked on Withington Hospital.

More recently, Mansells expanded into off-site construction, carrying out work on hotels, offices and student accommodation across the country, including work in the Midlands, London and the South East.

Ted was a lifelong Manchester United supporter and an avid golfer who was very proud of his two handicap. He is survived by two daughters and three grandchildren.



Planned Office Interiors delivers new branch look for NFU Mutual

Staffordshire-based Planned Office Interiors has completed a contemporary re-fit of financial business NFU Mutual's Sevenoaks branch as part of a broader project to mirror the changing demographic of its clients and improve how staff and clients interact with NFU spaces.

This project, a joint venture between Planned Office Interiors and Make Consulting, saw the commercial interior fit-out specialist working to Make Consulting's specified layout to deliver a fit-out that included Tektura bespoke wallpaper and Komfort glass partitioning.

An urban colour scheme flows through the wallpaper, furniture, carpets and soft furnishing, in both the public and private spaces, to achieve a branch refurbishment of exceptional levels of finish and style.

FIND OUT MORE

www.plannedofficeinteriors.co.uk



Portview raises the bar-ista with new Nespresso boutique

Luxury fit-out specialist Portview Fit-Out has completed a new concept boutique in Manchester Arndale for premium coffee brand Nespresso.

Every feature of the multi-sensory retail environment has been designed to reference the provenance of the coffee. This includes table tops made from used coffee grounds from the Nespresso factory in Switzerland, wood which has been 100 per cent sourced from Nespresso reforestation programmes on coffee farms, and artwork created from recycled Nespresso aluminium.

The store incorporates two complementary geometric shapes that pay tribute to the brand's ethos. The square (seen in the display units and POS) is synonymous with values of perfection, pleasure, aestheticism and simplicity, with the circle (seen in the bar stools and curved tasting unit) evoking the coffee cup, discovery, tasting and the senses.

Simon Campbell, Portview's managing director, said: "This project required us to harness our skills in logistics to procure specialist materials from across Europe that met with Nespresso's strong sustainability principles and design requirements."

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www.portview.co.uk

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