

# SPECFINISH

The magazine of FIS representing finishes and interiors



## Making the right ceiling choice

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**FIS**

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# Carillion collapse puts payment in the spotlight

The Carillion collapse has illustrated the lack of payment security in the UK construction industry and the devastating impact on small firms up and down the country. Leading trade association the Specialist Engineering Contractors' Group (SEC Group) is calling on Parliament to take steps to finally tackle bad payment practices in the construction industry.

Estimates of supply chain losses look likely to top £1 billion and commentators have said that some of these losses could have been avoided if measures had been in place to provide security of payment to Carillion's supply chain.

Professor Rudi Klein, chief executive at SEC Group, said: "If all payments to the supply chain had been routed through a project bank account (PBA), rather than through Carillion's accounts, firms would have received their monies.

"Moreover, there would have been less disruption to the progress of works on public sector projects. Millions of pounds of retention monies have been

lost. These were monies withheld – ostensibly as security in case of defects – to bolster Carillion's working capital."

SEC Group is calling on Parliament to insist that the Government supports the Construction (Retention Deposit Schemes) Bill ('the Aldous Bill') which had its First Reading on 9 January 2018; and SEC Group invites the Government to legislate to require that PBAs are put in place for all construction works over £1 million.

Professor Klein is also demanding that the Government issues strong guidance to all public sector procurers and that if lead contractors do not pay their supply chains within 30 days (as already required under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015), they should be barred from bidding for public sector works for a period of at least two years.

### FIND OUT MORE

[Turn to page 18: The Carillion Collapse](#)

## Housing demand drives job growth while skills remain in short supply

More than 150,000 construction jobs are set to be created over the next five years despite Brexit uncertainty and Carillion's collapse, a new forecast from the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) reveals.

This year's Construction Skills Network (CSN) report confirms a slowdown in commercial sector activity and points to infrastructure and housing as the best performing sectors. It indicates that a massive 15,350 carpenters and 9,350 labourers will be needed as homebuilding ramps up.

However, the strongest job growth will be in a range of professional and managerial roles as the industry seeks to boost its productivity, which will grow by 7.8 per cent and 5.6 per cent over the next five years.

Meanwhile, key results from the Federation of Master Builders' (FMB) latest State of Trade Survey, found that more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of construction SMEs are struggling to hire bricklayers and 63 per cent are struggling to hire carpenters and joiners – the highest figures since records began in 2008. The number of firms reporting difficulties hiring plumbers and electricians (48 per cent), plasterers (46 per cent) and floorers (30 per cent) also reached record highs.

## CPA forecasts 2018 output to be flat

The construction industry is bracing itself as the demise of Carillion and falls in public housing repair work are expected to hit the industry in 2018. Growth is expected to remain flat – at best – according to the Construction Products Association's (CPA) forecasts.

Infrastructure remains the main bright spot for UK construction where any growth in construction at all will be reliant on government's delivery of infrastructure projects. However, concerns for the industry escalated following Carillion's liquidation as the firm accounted for £850 million of the sector's projects.

The social housing sector is suffering from a lack of finance available to local authorities and concerns on the capacity to deliver the work. The public housing repair, maintenance and improvement sector has fallen 20 per cent since 2010 and is expected to fall by a further 2 per cent in 2018.

The sharpest decline for construction in 2018 will be in commercial. Noble Francis, Economics Director at the CPA, said: "We expect offices construction to fall 15 per cent this year as Brexit uncertainty means that international investors hold back on major new investment in the capital."

The latest CPA forecast mirrors January's IHS Markit Construction Purchasing Managers Index which warned of weakening UK construction output.

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### FIND OUT MORE

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## Apprentice of the Year goes to Sean Dooner

Sean Dooner, an apprentice dryliner with MPG Contracts, has been named Apprentice of the Year at the FIS President's Lunch, held at Plaisterers' Hall in London last month.

The Apprentice of the Year Award for Sean came after his recent Gold Medal in Plastering and Dry Lining in the World Skills UK competition at the end of last year.

Sean (right) is pictured receiving the award from Dean Pinner, managing director of CCF, which sponsored the Apprentice of the Year Award.

**FIND OUT MORE** Turn to page 16

# FIS rolls out BuildBack in Birmingham



FIS Skills held an event for Midlands-based contractors in Birmingham last month to showcase its successful BuildBack initiative, which is helping to develop drylining skills and fill a current skills gap in the finishes and interiors sector.

Contractors attended a BuildBack assessment day at Birmingham South & City College's Bordesley Green construction campus to meet with BuildBack trainees, look around the college facilities and talk to college staff, other employers and partners supporting the programme.

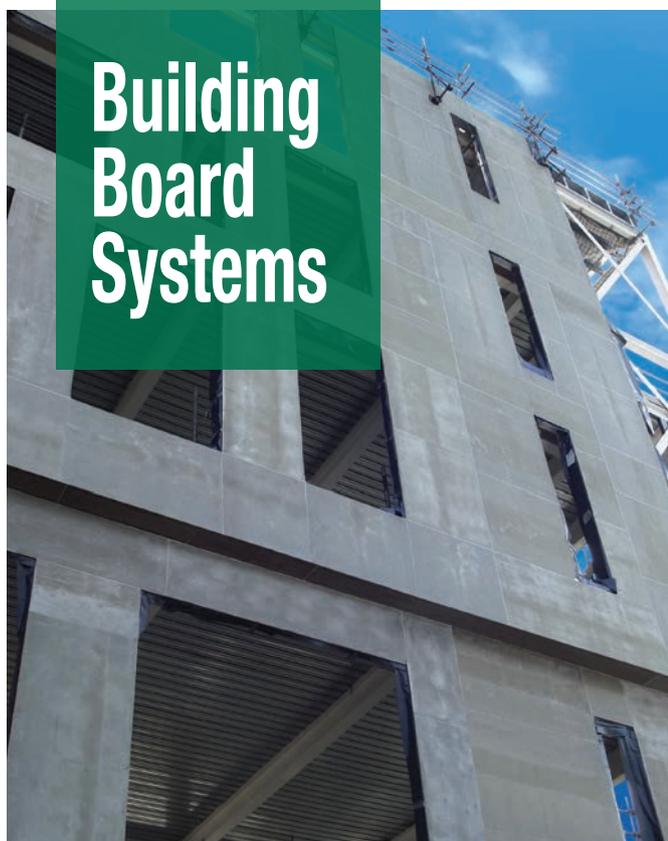
BuildBack provides opportunities for job seekers to complete a two-week Specialist Upskilling Programme in drylining course (SUP) to develop the skills and competencies required for installing drylining, followed by two weeks' work placement on-site with a local employer.

FIS's BuildBack initiative was successfully piloted in Newcastle last year and is a key part of the association's Fit-Out Futures programme to address the skills shortages and enable new entrants to join skilled trades.

**FIND OUT MORE**

[www.thefis.org/skills-hub/sector-training/buildback-programme](http://www.thefis.org/skills-hub/sector-training/buildback-programme)

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## Editor's column

### Look in the mirror

Even a couple of months on from the unmitigated cock up at Carillion the fallout continues (turn to page 18). The regulatory agencies and MPs are falling over each other to unpick the reasons and ramifications for the collapse – but it's all too little, too late.

Some customers and contractors need to take a long hard look in the mirror. The damage that both end-user clients and tier1 contractors have caused by withholding payments is clear to see. The sooner better protection is put in place the better it will be for the whole supply chain.

Look at the facts. Carillion was holding on to more than £800 million of supply chain money (not theirs) in cash retentions and it has all gone up in smoke, never to be seen again. Whether retentions remain is for another time. What is at stake now is the money that already belongs to the supply chain; retentions is not a piggy-bank for the sole use of those holding retentions.

Let everyone get behind plans from the Specialist Engineering Contractors' Group to ring fence and protect cash retentions. Then, once retentions are protected, the government should take a lead and tackle the culture of lengthening payment terms. The industry itself has failed to drive out bad practices and, unbelievably, some companies still use every excuse imaginable to avoid paying their bills. It has to stop.

News that the interiors sectors needs more skilled workers than any other sector only goes to emphasise that specialist contractors should also be getting behind the FIS BuildBack initiative (see page 3). At a time when CITB is withdrawing from training, it is good to learn of plans to increase capacity and help to deliver new skills for the sector.

The commitment to delivering the highest skills remains a top priority. Without effective controls and pre-planning to prevent problems, the sector will not move forward. However, specialist contractors do need to demonstrate competence in the sector and ensure that their operatives have the appropriate skills and abilities to do the job. Turn to page 12 to find out how FIS is championing the competence agenda.

Take a look in the mirror and ask if you're playing your part to deliver the right culture and skills so the sector can continue to thrive.

**Adrian JG Marsh**  
Editor

# Change is needed



The first weeks of January were dominated by the collapse of Carillion – one of the UK's largest contractors. The losses of £1.25bn on construction jobs were clear, and yet they continued to pay dividends at the expense of their supply chain and pension fund liabilities.

Giving evidence before the parliamentary enquiry, former directors claimed they didn't know or blamed each other while holding on to lucrative bonuses, earned for what is unclear. Only the clearly deluded remuneration committee can explain. To cap it all, they claimed they had no idea that Carillion was regarded within the industry as 'bad payers'. Really? Everyone else knew. Including, apparently, Carillion, which said five years ago: "There has been some negative coverage recently about our payment terms." Memories are clearly short when you get paid more than a million a year!

What of government in this scandal? Several companies have mentioned to me that they took comfort from the fact Carillion was given two HS2 tunnel contracts worth £1.4bn. If government is willing to back them, then they must be secure, right? Wrong. If normal PQQ processes were followed – the ones that FIS members are subject to – they wouldn't have been given a painting and decorating contract let alone a key role in a major infrastructure project.

The impact upon members is immediate and stark. At the President's Lunch we could have had an empty table for Carlton Ceilings & Partitions, members since 2000; a good company taken down by Carillion. Many

others have seen profits wiped out for the year, leading to redundancies.

To add salt to the wounds, there is the loss of the cash retentions held by Carillion. Cash retentions are designed to protect clients from insolvency in the supply chain and to ensure all defects are rectified. In the wake of Grenfell, it is difficult to argue against the current need for this. As the cash is not held in trust, though, it just became part of Carillion's working capital, and one thing they were desperately short of was cash. When Carillion failed, all the cash retentions went with it. This rightly belonged to the subcontractors and means the clients have derived no benefit from the practice.

If the cash retentions were held in an escrow account, in trust, then Carillion would not have had access to the funds and no incentive to hang on to it. This is a simple, neat solution that means cash retentions correctly fulfil their role in the contract.

There is a Bill before parliament now which is due a second reading next month to require cash retentions to be held in trust. We need you to support this campaign by writing to your MPs; a draft letter can be found on the FIS website. MPs will only respond to action from you so while Carillion is still in the headlines, please get writing.

It may appear to be a small step but it is a start, and a start in the right direction.

**DAVID FRISE**  
FIS chief executive  
[www.thefis.org](http://www.thefis.org)

# A commitment to people

People are a fundamental ingredient for success. Without the right people, with the necessary skills to deliver your core service, any business is in a weak position. **Aaron Barbeau**, from Beissier, considers how shifting attitudes in the supply chain can make a huge difference.

Way back in 1998, Sir John Egan, a former head of Jaguar Cars, led a Construction Task Force that took the Latham Report to the next stage. It found the industry was under-achieving and called for dramatic improvements. Egan suggested the industry should focus efforts on delivering value for customers, reducing waste and improving quality. What's different now?

Our great industry remains inherently conservative and traditional, and breaking down traditional structures is very difficult. In the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster, the industry

may finally be addressing the weaknesses of Building Regulations. Equally, the collapse of Carillion may see aggressive commercial structures tackled head on.

Construction remains a people business and, even today, report after report talks about a skills crisis. Wherever you are in the world, and in whatever specialist trade, it is people that make it happen – either on-site or off-site.

Here is where construction product manufacturers are all working to develop traditional and new products that help to satisfy customers, by providing

better value and less waste, and improving quality.

At Beissier we've worked hard to create fillers and plaster products that suit the way specialist contractors want to work. For example, the Bagar Airliss range of spray-applied plaster is a single component product ready for use, which allows continuous and uninterrupted application to improve productivity. OK, it's not the traditional hand-applied wet plaster, but in today's world of skills shortages, it is a more efficient way of working and an equal to traditional finishes.

New methods also challenge traditional ways of education

and training. So, training people to develop this new skill can be delivered quickly and effectively. This means new skills coming to the market to fill the gaps that are there for everyone to use.

New products can also open the door to multi-skilled tradespeople who can deliver a broader set of fit-out skills, filling more gaps and helping to improve business efficiency and profitability.

**AARON BARBEAU**

UK sales manager  
Beissier UK  
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## New Glasroc X Sheathing Board from British Gypsum

British Gypsum has launched a new high-performance external sheathing solution, Glasroc X Sheathing Board, which is the first available to provide up to six months' weather protection, as certified by the British Board of Agrément (BBA).



Glasroc X Sheathing Board has undergone rigorous testing to establish that it successfully meets all of the requirements of the BBA. This certification confirms that Glasroc X Sheathing Board will withstand all weather conditions when left exposed prior to the completion of the external facade, when used in conjunction with Glasroc X Screws and Glasroc X Sealant in accordance with the installation guidance.

The new sheathing board also has many practical installation benefits. It is approximately 35 per cent lighter than cement particle boards – resulting in it being significantly easier to handle and install on-site, which is especially important for contractors working at height. And, as with plasterboard, it is easy to score and snap with no need for sawing or specialist dust extraction equipment.

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## Nevill Long launches new partitioning system



Specialist interior systems distributor Nevill Long has introduced its new Longline Vision partitioning system that combines design versatility and rapid installation to easily create bright open spaces.

The new partitioning system has slim aluminium profiles and no vertical mullions between the system's panes, making it easy to create a beautiful look. For a completely seamless, streamlined effect, it can also be integrated directly into drywall partitioning.

Versatility is also an advantage, with the new system offering design options to create everything from quiet corners to communal areas. And with a variety of glazing options together with manifestations from electric privacy glass to patterns and designs applied through etching or adhesive film, it offers occupants the choice of privacy or clarity as required.

The Longline Vision system is available now from Nevill Long's nationwide network of branches.

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

## SPSenvirowall expands into cladding market

External wall insulation and render provider SPSenvirowall has created an exclusive UK partnership with specialist cladding manufacturer Dynamic Cladding as part of its expansion into the external rain screen cladding market.

The move brings A1 non-combustible and bomb-blast-rated cladding systems to the UK for the first time, with Dynamic Cladding's glass rainscreen system achieving the highest fire rating possible and its stone cladding being the only one in Europe that achieved a bomb blast rating.

"This is an important move both for us as a business and for the industry as a whole," said Paul Winwood, managing director of SPSenvirowall.

"The partnership is bringing some of the world's highest safety rated cladding products to the UK market for the first time, opening up opportunities for higher level specification. Dynamic Cladding products are ETA approved, which meets and goes beyond BBA requirements."

Products available include DynaPanel Glass & Stone systems, both frameless and without face fixings, and DynaPanel Stone Veneer for interior wall linings and feature areas.

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For a Longline Vision brochure or to find your nearest Nevill Long branch visit [nevilllong.co.uk](http://nevilllong.co.uk)



## Hilti launches battery-powered fastening tool

Hilti has launched the next generation of its award-winning BX 3 battery-powered direct-fastening tool, which has been adapted for faster and quieter operations for the interior finishing trades.

The propellant-free cordless tool weighs just 4 kg and is powered by Hilti's industry-leading 22V batteries, allowing it to fix up to 800 nails into steel, concrete and wood on a single charge.

The magazine – which contains 30 nails measuring up to 36mm in length – gives both a visual and audible alert when empty. Its advancements deliver lower recoil and minimal noise, making it fully compliant with HSE guidance.

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



## Rockfon throughout for new school project

A variety of Rockfon acoustic ceiling tiles have been installed at Islwyn High in Caerphilly as part of a project to amalgamate two former schools in a new purpose-built development.

Rockfon Scholar 40mm and Rockfon Tropic dB40 ceiling tiles were installed on the school's top floors in part to reduce the noise generated internally by rainfall on the external metal roof. Rockfon Scholar provides Class A sound absorption and has an impact-resistant surface, ideal for education buildings as it helps lower the level of reverberation in classrooms.

Rockfon Tropic dB offers superior sound absorption and sound insulation which decreases the ambient sound level in the classrooms and limits noise transference.

For the reception area and dining hall, Rockfon Blanka tiles with Z-edge conceal the grid to create a modern linear aesthetic, and in the classrooms, circulation areas and auditorium, 4,800m<sup>2</sup> of Rockfon Koral E-edge ceiling tiles provide acoustic control and the safest fire classification.

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

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## Siniat's Weather Defence is out of this world

Siniat's Weather Defence 2nd Generation board has been tested to the limit after being launched into space to take on the most extreme conditions.

Part of the Etex Building Performance group, Siniat powered a small payload made out of the external sheathing product into space using a meteorological balloon.

The specialist material, which can be left exposed on frame for up to 12 months, experienced atmospheric temperatures as low as minus 50 degrees Celsius and wind speeds of over 200 miles per hour. Able to fend off the elements, Weather Defence can be used to quickly weather-proof buildings during construction, allowing interior trades to start work before the facade has been completed to boost on-site productivity.

Siniat's product manager, Mark Riley, said: "The project was a unique way of showing Weather Defence's capabilities, exposing the material to one of the world's harshest environments. Our research and innovation teams are committed to making sure Siniat's materials meet and surpass the demands placed upon them by specifiers and designers to speed up construction and provide quality of life for building users."

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

## Selectaglaze stops the draughts for hospice

Secondary glazing specialist Selectaglaze has helped a charity transform two old council buildings into a modern Children's Hospice providing respite care for families supporting children with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition. Julia's House Devises is the second hospice for the charity – the first is in Dorset.

To address the old building's draughty primary windows, the architect specified thermally insulating secondary glazing to four box sash windows. The Series 25 vertical sliders from Selectaglaze provided the most suitable option to match the existing sightlines and comfortably operate to the sizes specified.

Selectaglaze has a variety of tested products that can reduce U-values to around 1.8 when glazed with low emissivity glass. With the Pilkington Spacia glass in the Series 25 unit, these can be reduced even further to around 0.8. All units are designed in-house and expertly installed with high-performance brush or compression seals to ensure the tightest fit, which dramatically reduces air infiltration to help eliminate draughts.

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

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## Creating the right image with your pictures

Now that we're all walking around with smartphones, taking images of our work has never been easier. But are they good enough, and could they be much better? FIS technical director **Joe Cilia** met up with interior and architectural photographer Marek Sikora to ask "what makes a good picture?" and provide some useful pointers for fit-out contractors.



"Light is one of the most important things to consider," highlighted Mr Sikora. "Especially where glazed partitions are the main subject. This is because glass will reflect light and alter images. It will even alter colour."

How many of us consider this when we snap away to get the latest images for social media or just a quick photo as our entry to the FIS Contractors Awards?

Mr Sikora recommends taking time to visit the site before completion to understand the impact of daylight on the space at different times of day. He said: "Take your time. If the aspect is easterly, perhaps it's better to come back in the afternoon when the lighting is softer. Ideally, aim for a time when the light levels outside are similar to those inside, as this avoids harsh shadows and contrasts; unless, of course, that's what you're looking to achieve."

Moving on to composition and it's important that the vertical lines are

all vertical. Avoid lenses that distort and check that the camera is level. You can do this using the grid overlay on all cameras or using a multi-purpose spirit level. A tripod is a must for any good image, as it allows you to consider the image, look for things like chairs that don't align, a reflection of the camera or a smudge on the glass before taking a series of images and only noticing it later.

There are a number of tips when it comes to composition which are centred on perspective and symmetry. Look at any good picture and it often has points of interest that are composed using the 'rule of thirds' – this is where the overlay grid comes into its own. The rule of thirds involves thinking about your image using two horizontal lines and two vertical lines and positioning the important elements in your desired photo along those lines, or at the points where they meet. Consider placing something of interest like a chair in the foreground on one of

these 'thirds' so your eye is led into the picture.

Generally, a manual setting is preferable to the automatic one, which works by making its own calculation based on light levels and can leave some detail in the dark. Set the camera or even a smartphone to manual using an app, and adjust the exposure and ISO setting. If your shutter speed setting is anything less than 1/125th of a second, you need to use a tripod, and even then, use a remote control or use the timer to avoid shake when you press the shutter, otherwise your image could have blurry movement.

A tripod also allows you to consider the composition, which may often be improved by setting the camera lower than you might normally think to do. The photograph above showing glass partitioning was taken at about 1.2m from the floor. Eye height is nearer 1.5m, which would distort

the vertical lines and unbalance the gap between the subject at the ceiling and floor level.

Another tip is to think about your audience and what you want the image to say about you, your project and your company. What expectation are you looking to match? Where will the image be used? For example, a site progress image will be different from one being used for a brochure or website – different again for social media.

Mr Sikora suggests: "Think about the message you want the image to carry. This is important as you might only get one chance to impress. So, check if it's a landscape or portrait shot that you need – or maybe both."

"Cropping was something I used to do," he added, "but I don't anymore because it reduces the image quality. You should aim to compose and produce a final image by adjusting your position, the height and angle of the camera."

So, how do you find a professional photographer for that hero shot? Mr Sikora's final piece of advice is to start with an internet search, look for commercial photographers working with interiors then look only at the images and find photographers whose images are close to the style you want. Send a brief to a selection of these photographers and see who responds. You'll need to be able to work with the individual photographer, so take time talking with them before making your final choice.

Marek Sikora's work can be seen at [www.mareksikora.com](http://www.mareksikora.com), on Instagram ([mareksikoraphotography](https://www.instagram.com/mareksikoraphotography)) or you can contact him at [ms@mareksikora.com](mailto:ms@mareksikora.com)

### FIND OUT MORE

#### JOE CILIA

FIS technical director  
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# The backbone to drylining just got stronger

A large part of the strength of any drylining system is in its frame, so we've improved Gypframe, the backbone to our systems.

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# Demonstrating competence in the fit-out sector

**Helen Yeulet** from FIS Skills looks at the need for specialist contractors to demonstrate competence in the sector and how the CSCS card has an essential role to play.

It seems the construction industry has been sleepwalking towards the cliff edge for some time. This was tragically confirmed with the fire at Grenfell Tower where there are indications of failures at every level from local government, contractors, regulators and beyond trickling down the supply chain.

In the aftermath, Dame Judith Hackitt is leading an independent review of Building Regulations and fire safety. Her interim findings highlighted that the construction industry's regulatory system is broken and contractors are taking short cuts, with little or no quality monitoring or competency assurance. The Interim Report specifically states a need to raise levels of competence and establish formal accreditation of those engaged in the fire prevention aspects of the design, construction, inspection and maintenance of high-rise residential and complex buildings.

Joe Cilia, technical director of FIS, highlighted: "The word 'competency' is mentioned 61 times, 'evidenced' 92 times and 'compliance' 94 times in this Interim Report. That should be a good indicator of direction of travel."

## What is competence?

Debbie Carlton from Dynamic Knowledge, which works with organisations to solve capability capacity and competency challenges, says the most robust definition of 'competence' is from her colleague Dr Gang Zhao, who defines competence as "an ability demonstrated in an activity at work which includes abilities, skills, expertise, aptitude, values and attitudes". Being competent is about proven ability to do and perform in given contexts and it concerns a person being suitability qualified, experienced and current for the work – job, role, project – being or to be done.

Validation of competency is often based on a complicated set of evidence related to individuals and teams, with factors including

certifications, field observations, number of times a task has been performed, number of years worked in an area, areas of technical expertise, continuing training, employee performance, and job and role descriptions.

## How do we, as a sector, demonstrate competence?

The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) put its weight behind the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) when it recommended that industry, including trade associations, contractors, clients and government, should specify and promote card schemes carrying the CSCS logo with no equivalents accepted.

The minimum standard for a skilled occupation card is an NVQ Level 2 qualification relevant to the occupation plus a separate health and safety element. Cards for new entrants, apprentices, trainees, labourers or workers in the process of obtaining formal qualifications are clearly identifiable and a transition process to bring all existing cardholders up to the minimum standard by 2020 will be agreed and implemented by CSCS.

One of the first steps was the withdrawal of Construction Related Occupation (CRO) cards, and FIS is supporting the sector by making sure there is a path to move CRO card holders to the relevant CSCS card.

CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the required training and qualifications for the type of work they are carrying out. The new CSCS SmartCard can link with access control systems, improve management of training records and connect with project management systems, making CSCS cards the ideal technology solution to greatly assist with proving competence.

Julian Daniel, managing director of Blue Sky Building, said: "If the government is serious about training, especially in a post-Brexit world, there needs to be encouragement and stricter

## Competent workforce – Can you prove it?

As a result of what happened at Grenfell Tower, clients are starting to demand that contractors prove they have correctly installed a compliant product and that their installers are skilled in their trade.

### So, how can you demonstrate it?

A CSCS Skilled Worker card provides certification of skills and training, and it can be kept updated as operatives' skills develop and grow.

### Say "yes" to CSCS

Email [skills@thefis.org](mailto:skills@thefis.org) to find out how FIS can support you or visit [www.cscs.uk.com](http://www.cscs.uk.com)

procurement rules (carrot and stick) to ensure companies maintain minimum competency standards among their contractors.

"Just like we wouldn't allow surgeons or teachers to practise without certain skills and competencies, the same needs to be said of our construction workers. It is imperative that employers support the industry standards and invest in their businesses and employee career development."

The Lakanal House fire in south-east London, the collapse of the gable end of a wall at Oxfangs Primary School in Edinburgh and Grenfell Tower all indicate issues with a lack of competency. Now we have a direction from Dame Judith Hackitt, we are clearly on notice that we need to ensure we can demonstrate competency going forward.

FIND OUT MORE

[www.thefis.org/skills-hub](http://www.thefis.org/skills-hub)

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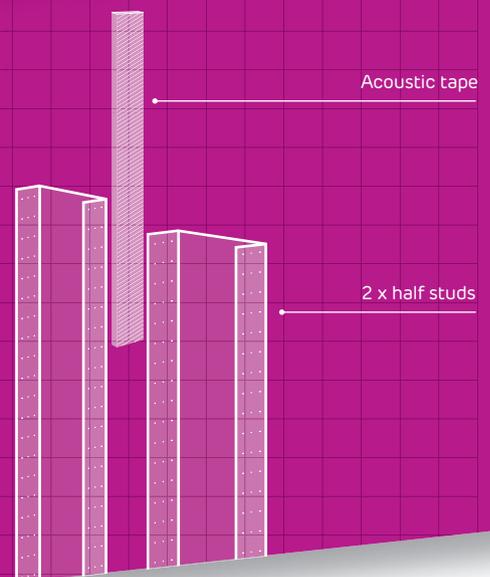


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# Making the right choice

Ceilings have been pushed to the forefront of architectural workspace design and can offer stylish solutions to a host of design challenges. What's next for the sector? **Paul Thompson** reports.

It has only been relatively recently that anyone has really started paying close attention to ceilings. Other than deciding whether one was actually needed at all, arguably the biggest decision for architects and designers had been what material to specify. Choice was limited and ideas about acoustic performance, luminosity and temperature control were just that – ideas.

Leap forward a decade or two and how things have changed. Now the range and quality of choice available to designers, architects, clients and end users is staggering, partly driven by current trends that see the exposed concrete ceiling and industrial chic dominate, and partly by an increased demand for environmentally sound and sustainable buildings.

However, the demise of the standard suspended ceiling is over exaggerated, manufacturers claim, with clients and end users now far more sophisticated in their understanding of ceiling solutions. A mixture of requirements is now the norm and manufacturers have to engage far more with customers to deliver any added value, according to Tony Thompson, sales manager at Armstrong Ceilings.

He said: "There is a trend for exposed soffits and that has seen an increase in demand for solutions to issues that can arise from their use, but the market for wall-to-wall ceilings is still massive.

"The market is getting less 'product' driven and more 'solution' driven. Making the system easier to install or taking the heavy lifting element out of the design are extremely important. We're always looking at product innovation, but that is only part of the story," he added.

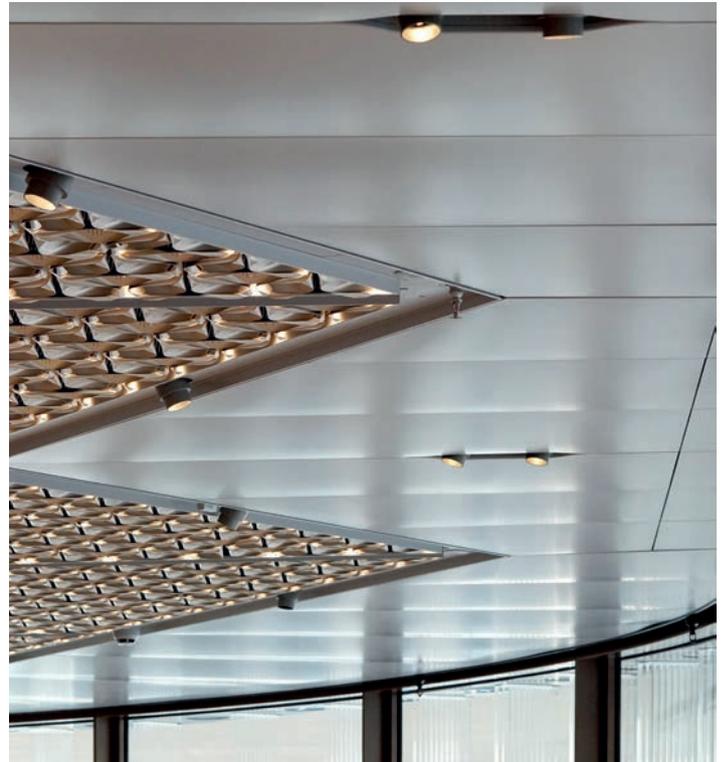
Product innovation is not just about performance. The value to the client might be in its environmental and sustainability score.

"Manufacturers are looking at key elements in their own production cycle to help make their products more efficient," commented Rachel Grundy, ceilings and partitioning category manager at specialist distributor CCF, adding, "If, for example, we can make it easier to recycle standard white mineral ceiling tiles and divert them from landfill or use less water during the manufacturing process, then that would be a huge benefit to developers and contractors who are targeted on BREEAM grading and environmental KPIs."

But there is no denying that clients' and end users' tastes have matured – particularly in a commercial office. The impact that ceiling solutions can have on comfort levels and ultimately the performance of their staff has increased, and the demand for more design-led solutions with it.

That demand for innovation is at its greatest in London and the South East, although increasingly there are signs that the provincial giants of Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester are catching up.

The market is getting less 'product' driven and more 'solution' driven.



SAS International's integrated ceiling system has helped impact the final BREEAM rating for Bloomberg at its new headquarters in the City of London.

Metal ceilings are a particular area where London dominates. The expectation for companies investing in high-grade office space for their global or European headquarters has seen some astonishing movements in ceiling design and demand for such systems, a trend that is destined to continue.

One such development that has focused design tastes and thrown down the gauntlet to ceiling designers and installation contractors worldwide is the new Bloomberg headquarters building in London. With a client prepared to listen to its expert team and push the boundaries – and a financial purse big enough to cope – the final development is a well-regarded triumph.

"We were brought in to the team at an early stage," said Matthew Mills, group marketing manager at SAS International. "Sustainability was a very important issue for the client and the integrated system we devised helped impact the final BREEAM rating. The industry needs to be able to help clients find the right interior for them and the people they employ. Often that will mean a mix of ceiling systems and baffles.

"Bloomberg is a design statement, but you do need a client with the aspiration – and deep pockets – to be able to do that," he added.

For contractors and fit-out companies, the supply chain needs to be flexible enough in what it can offer. This is key, according to Paul Kavanagh, contracts manager at workplace interiors specialist BW: Workplace Experts.

"Everyone is better educated about ceiling systems and what can be achieved now. Different sectors will want different solutions. A law firm might want the clear soffit 'industrial' look for its backrooms, but in its meeting rooms, its clients still expect the old look with lots of wood and panelling," he said.

And that message continues throughout. Whatever the designers throw, there is a ceiling system that can deal with it – or the manufacturers will find a solution.

# Spotlight on success in our sector

The increasing importance of compliance and competence was high on the agenda as FIS recognised apprentices and top employees across the finishes and interiors sector at this year's President's Lunch. More than 300 members and guests from across the sector packed Plaisterers' Hall last month for this major industry event.

In his new role as President of FIS, Andrew Smith opened the event and welcomed FIS members, guests and sponsors, thanking them for their support.

Addressing the audience, Mr Smith said: "Here we are at the start of another year, with a strong UK economy but surrounded by swelling seas of uncertainty and challenge, with some recent events of seismic proportion: the vote to leave the EU, a chronic skills shortage (even before the vote), and the tragedy of Grenfell Tower last summer."

With the liquidation of Carillion having shaken the construction industry and the ramifications significantly impacting the finishes and interiors sector, particularly with regard to monies held in retention, Mr Smith went on to talk about the perilous state of so many main contractors in the UK, acknowledging how many people in the room rely on them – directly or indirectly. He highlighted how FIS is helping by pushing on members' behalf for retention money to be held in trust so that if a main contractor does fold, then money can be ring fenced.

Mr Smith reported how technical leadership has always been a key focus for FIS, and never more so following the systematic failures at Grenfell Tower and the questions, challenges and opportunities this now presents. He touched on how the days of uncontrolled value engineering and a "that will do" attitude are gone, and highlighted the expectation of far greater scrutiny of both what has been installed and how it has been installed.

Linking this with skills development, Mr Smith said: "Compliance and competence are going to be increasingly important in the coming years and FIS has invested in a skills team to help deliver a competent workforce



FIS president Andrew Smith.



for the sector – and to help FIS members get full value from the levy.

"This programme is called Fit-Out Futures and the President's Lunch provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate some of the successes to date with our Fit-Out Futures Awards."

This introduced the unveiling and award presentation of the three winners in the Fit-Out Futures categories – Apprentice of the Year, Outstanding Employee and Future Leader – before lunch was served.

Comedian Ian Stone provided the after-lunch entertainment. A stand-up comedian, broadcaster and writer, Ian is famous for appearing as a guest on shows such as the comedy panel show *Mock the Week* and is a regular guest on BBC Radio 5's *Fighting Talk*.

David Frise, FIS chief executive, returned to the stage to present the final award of the day – Lifetime Achievement – which went to Phil Taylor of Taylor Hart.

Read on to find out all about this year's winners...



## Apprentice of the Year

### WINNER

#### Sean Dooner – Apprentice Dryliner at MPG Contracts

Sean returned to work as a labourer after nine years as a personal carer, taking up an offer of an apprenticeship to achieve his long-term goal of having a trade.

MPG Contracts' HSEQ manager, Alex Adams, put Sean forward. He said: "In just a year, Sean has learned every aspect of drylining on-site and his attendance at college is exemplary. He's passed written technical exams ahead of hundreds of others. Sean is a great example to show that retraining is an option to those willing to commit themselves to attaining a qualification through hard work."

The judges commented: "Sean's commitment to following his goals and making the bold decision to retrain demonstrates a great strength of character."



### RUNNER-UP

#### Conor Bartram – Apprentice Trainee Site Manager at Pexhurst Services

As described by company director Nick Tagliarini, Conor has been "a great success in his first year" and "handles himself very well with subcontractors and clients on-site, setting a good example to others".

Judges mentioned Conor's excellent qualifications and training levels and how he shows clear potential to be a leader.



## Future Leader

### WINNER

#### Stephen Reynolds – Category Manager – Ceilings at SIG

According to nominator Craig Adams, branch director with SIG, Stephen demonstrates his credentials on a daily basis by having the all-round characteristics of a great leader and being someone people willingly follow, rather than someone who takes an authoritarian approach.

Stephen's positivity and a clear plan helped to bring people together in difficult circumstances in 2017. Craig added: "Stephen has the ability to change his approach as the situation requires. He supports and protects his colleagues, and always try to help wherever he can."

The judges described Stephen as being someone who "brings people together with his all-inclusive approach which creates an atmosphere of openness and trust".



## Outstanding Employee

### WINNER

#### John Ramsay – Project Supervisor at Brian Hendry Interiors

Not only is John an 'Outstanding Employee' for the company, but he is 'Employee 001', being the company's very first employee back in 2004 when he took the risk to join what was then a start-up business.

Gordian Mothersole, the company's business development manager, described John as being an exceptional project supervisor, someone who continually leads by example, who was fundamental to the company winning Gold Award in the inaugural FIS Scottish Awards and who site managers continually request to have back for repeat contracts.

The judges said: "John took a chance on a start-up and has shown a continued dedication to drive the business forward. He is a great asset to the business and very much respected by his peers."



## Lifetime Achievement

### WINNER

#### Phil Taylor – retired Estimator/ Director at Taylor Hart

Phil has worked in the interior fit-out sector for the last 30 years. Since setting up Taylor Hart in 1998, he made it his mission to develop people's skills and knowledge, firstly to benefit the company but also to benefit individuals and industry as a whole.

What Phil learned from construction sites and installing ceilings and partitions was the vital importance of learning both on and off the job to improve one's lot. He, therefore, encouraged learning and training wherever he could: 'training others' became a company mantra, and all his employees and subcontractors knew that training was a given. He has brought people through the company from teenagers to the senior positions they hold today.

Phil is described as being "widely loved by everyone – colleagues, suppliers and customers – for his passion, inspiration, guidance, mentorship as well as his great sense of humour".



# The Carillion Collapse

**Simon Lewis**, a partner in the Construction and Engineering team at Womble Bond Dickinson, considers the implications for the supply chain following Carillion's demise.



While the collapse of Carillion was looking increasingly likely over the course of last year, from the issue of the profit warning for a staggering £845m in July to the final demise on 15 January this year, nevertheless the nature and extent of the collapse and its ramifications is still shocking.

The relatively small amount left in the Carillion reserves available to address the enormous number of companies seeking to recover at least some of the monies owed to them shows the nature and scale of the crisis which had engulfed Carillion. While public sector projects may, to some degree, be protected, the private sector faces the bleak prospect of what would appear to be very little chance, if any, of recovering any significant sum from the liquidation of Carillion.

There has been, and no doubt will continue to be, any amount of analysis of what went wrong at Carillion and, hopefully, an increased awareness of the warning signs in other major

contractors who are known to be facing difficulty. I suspect a combination of wafer-thin margins, too much debt, too great a diversification across sectors and a wilful blindness to the risks of this strategy lead to the feeling that the only way to address these risks is to keep getting bigger and bigger in the hope that the consequences can, in some way, be outrun.

A number of problem projects which in their own might not have been enough to cause such devastating effects is the final straw. The financial market had seen this coming for some time, even before the profit warnings. Hedge funds and other financial speculators had been betting the firm would get into trouble (known as 'shorting' the Carillion shares), demonstrating a lack of confidence in Carillion's future. The huge debt plus a massive pension fund deficit of about £580m (though that figure may yet increase) meant that, ultimately, despite apparently having reached an agreement with

its creditors, Carillion found that its banks refused to lend it any more money.

Of more immediate concern to Carillion's suppliers: will I get paid? Given the very limited amount of cash reserves available, the signs for those involved in private sector contracts are not good. As is always the case when a major contractor collapses, the ripples spread down the supply chain with companies expecting to be paid or expecting to be able to recover their retentions now finding that they cannot.

There are signs, however, that steps will be taken to try to lessen the impact of this crisis: a group of banks has made more than £225m available to help businesses put at risk, and across the country there is a concerted effort by employers (including us) to try to find jobs for those who will be out of work as a result of the collapse.

The unions will continue to exert pressure on the government to do what it can to help those

affected. Large employers such as Nationwide and Centrica have indicated that they will directly employ Carillion staff working on their projects.

HMRC has indicated it will provide practical advice and guidance to those affected by the Carillion collapse through its Business Payment Support Service (BPSS) and that 'time to pay' tax arrangements may be available to those affected by this collapse ([www.gov.uk/government/news/practical-support-for-businesses-affected-by-carillion-liquidation](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/practical-support-for-businesses-affected-by-carillion-liquidation)). In addition, a number of banks are currently working with the government and trade body UK Finance to provide financial assistance to SMEs (by way of overdraft extensions, payment holidays and fee waivers) through what will inevitably be a difficult period.

The priority for the Official Receiver and his team of Special Managers is likely to remain focused on Carillion's public services contracts and the necessity to continue the services it provides on its many substantial infrastructure projects. Those projects that are the subject of Joint Ventures (JV) are likely to see the other JV partners taking over Carillion's share.

Notwithstanding the measures outlined above, it is Carillion's private sector contracts that will suffer most. There may be opportunities to retender these contracts after a period of time so that they can be continued with a replacement contractor, but this will not avoid the difficulties with cashflow and payment owed for work already carried out to subcontractors and suppliers.

The demise of Carillion is a tragedy for the construction sector on many levels. It is a tragedy that a contractor of Carillion's size, ability and scope has collapsed, a tragedy for those directly employed by Carillion but equally a tragedy for its many subcontractors and suppliers who will be directly affected through no fault of their own.

As always, you hope that this will not happen again but, as always, you fear that it will.

# It's almost time to say goodbye to JCT 2011

In preparation for the withdrawal of JCT 2011 (JCT has announced that from April 2018, the JCT 2011 contracts will no longer be in use in any format), the use of the JCT 2016 suite of contracts is on the rise. **Kara Price**, a solicitor within Womble Bond Dickinson's specialist construction team, has set out a brief summary of the changes which JCT users should be aware of when using the JCT 2016 contracts.

**Payment provisions** look quite different to those in the JCT 2011 suite and aim to simplify the payments terms as far as is possible. The terms have been updated to be more consistent with the Construction Supply Chain Payment Charter to speed up payments through the chain, and interim payment dates will now continue at monthly intervals until the final certificate (previously this changed to two-monthly intervals upon

practical completion). Notified sums are now also automatically recoverable as a debt.

**Insurance arrangements** now provide more flexibility with regards to the insuring of existing buildings and insurance Option C has been amended to allow parties to choose (by stating in the contract particulars) to replace this option with their own 'Replacement Schedule'. This change addresses the previous concern that these

provisions were not appropriate for works carried out in a building with multiple occupants.

**CDM Regulations 2015** are now fully incorporated.

**BIM** references have been added, including references to a BIM protocol.

**Performance bonds and parent company guarantees** have been added into each contract (except for the Minor Works form) as optional requirements. Note that

JCT has not provided its own forms to work from and leaves this for the parties to agree on.

**Public Contracts Regulations 2015** are now incorporated which are required by public sector bodies.

FIS members with any queries on this can call Womble Bond Dickinson on the Legal Helpline.

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# How to choose the right dust masks for your team



Dust masks are an essential item of personal protective equipment (PPE), preventing workers from contracting potentially fatal occupational diseases. Choice of mask (or respirator) is actually a matter of life and death. Read on for what to consider when choosing the right mask.

Under UK law, masks must meet certain standards according to application. Disposable masks must adhere to standard EN 149:2001, for instance. And they must be marked accordingly.

## It's all in the fit

Finding a suitable mask is more than simply choosing one at your preferred price point, or because it carries a British Standard logo. Your two key considerations should be suitability for the working environment/task, and the physical fit for the wearer. This point is critical – if the mask does not create a seal around the wearer's nose and mouth, it will leak. These gaps may be tiny, but so are the airborne particulates you are trying to protect against.

If the mask doesn't make an airtight seal, it isn't fit for purpose.

## Lethal assumptions

In the same way that hard hats need to be adjusted to the specific size of the wearer's head, mask fit can vary widely between individuals. You cannot simply assume that one size fits all. Instead, you will need to test a range of masks to ensure you get the right fit.

The variations in face shape are even more marked between men, women and people of different ethnicity. Diverse workforces will need to be particularly careful when specifying face masks.

## Factors that determine mask fit

Facial shape will be the most important factor in determining fit, but there are other details that must be considered. Does the wearer have facial hair? Beards and moustaches can create gaps that break the seal. The same is true of

marks and scars that raise the skin surface.

Employees who are reliant on glasses or contact lenses will also warrant special consideration. Any mask that they wear will need to allow sufficient clearance to wear glasses without compromising the seal against the skin. Don't forget that other PPE, such as helmets or ear defenders, could also affect mask fit.

You should also take note of any existing health conditions like asthma or skin allergies. Employees with latex allergies may not be able to tolerate certain seals, for instance. Or those with breathing conditions may require specialist equipment to cope with any additional strain as they inhale.

## Comfort is important

Although air seal is absolutely crucial, you should not underestimate the importance of comfort. Operatives may be expected to wear their masks for hours at a time, so the way the mask feels on their face should be considered.

The HSE suggests that workers issued with tight-fitting masks should take a break every hour or so, helping to relieve any discomfort. When trialling new masks, ask workers to wear theirs for at least an hour to accurately gauge the comfort levels. If a mask has a great seal, but is too uncomfortable to wear, it will not be suitable for your needs.

Don't forget that environmental conditions like heat and humidity will also have an impact on comfort levels.

## Face fit testing is not a one-off exercise

Because masks and respiratory protective equipment (RPE) are only as good as their seal, you (or the wearer) will need to conduct periodic face fit tests. These follow-up checks are important to see whether anything has changed since first fitting.

Wearers should check their mask for damage every time the mask is put on. You should also arrange urgent retests when a worker grows or shaves a beard as the seal between mask and face will definitely be affected.

Where sites operate a 'no-hat, no-entry' policy, you could consider adding mandatory mask fit tests to the mix. The dangers posed by inhaled particulates may take years to manifest, but the risks are as dangerous as being hit on the head by falling objects.

The issue of RPE is so significant that you must seek professional advice if you are in any doubt at all about your operatives' safety. Get in touch for help and advice on choosing and fitting masks.

## FIND OUT MORE

### DAVID CANT

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[www.veritas-consulting.co.uk](http://www.veritas-consulting.co.uk)

# 100 years of British Gypsum



The founding fathers of the British Plaster Board Company (BPB) held their first official meeting in the Crown & Mitre Hotel, Carlisle, in May 1917. During the intervening century, the plasterboard product has evolved to become an integral part of modern construction. Here we look at where British Gypsum started and how it has developed since.

## 1917

With mining operations dating back to 1876, it wasn't until 1917 that the British Plaster Board Company (BPB) began.

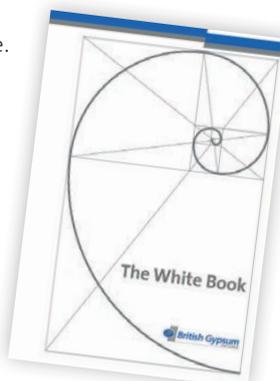


## 1960s

In 1966, British Gypsum set up the first training centre for the interiors industry in Erith, Kent. In 1967, the acoustic laboratories at East Leake, near Loughborough in Leicestershire, were officially opened. They now form part of British Gypsum's Building Test Centre.

## 1970s

British Gypsum published the 1st edition of the *White Book* – the industry's first complete specification guide. Now in its 12th edition, the *White Book*



has thoroughly earned its reputation as the industry bible. In 1978, British Gypsum also introduced the first lightweight metal drylining frame systems to the UK.

## 1930s

British Gypsum opened its new plant at Erith, Kent, making 30,000 square yards a day. The first 'Green Book of Plastering' was published, too.



## 1940s

The Gyproc factory in Rochester, Kent, manufactured Jettison tanks for Spitfires out of paper and glue during the war, and amazingly escaped any significant war damage. BPB and Gyproc amalgamated in 1944.

## 1950s

Already in South Africa, by the mid-1950s BPB was also firmly established in Europe with interests in Scandinavia and France, and then the Low Countries and Germany in the second half of the decade. The 50s also saw the first innovation in plasterboard with the introduction of the Paramount dry partition in 1952.

## 1980s

In 1989, ground was broken at British Gypsum's current head office building in East Leake. Two new board lines were also installed there in the mid-1980s, manufacturing 40 per cent of the company's output. In 1986, the groundbreaking Glasroc GRG (Glass Reinforced Gypsum) boards were launched.



## 1990s

British Gypsum launched Thistle MultiFinish plaster – the UK's leading finish coat plaster. In 1992, the largest plaster plant in Europe was built at Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire.

## 2000s

In 2005, British Gypsum became part of Saint-Gobain group; and in 2007, British Gypsum invested more than £120 million in opening a state-of-the-art plaster plant at East Leake and upgraded its plasterboard plant near Sherburn-in-Elmet, North Yorkshire.

## 2010s

In 2012, British Gypsum became the first UK gypsum manufacturer to achieve BES 6001 'very good' rating, which increased to 'excellent' in 2014.



## 2015

Gyproc Habito was launched – the first plasterboard not to require specialist fixings to hang heavy items with capability of holding 15kg with a single no.10 woodscrew.

Plasterboard products are manufactured across the world and have stretched the original concept to be a key feature of wall and ceiling solutions, both inside and outside buildings. It's a product that has driven dry construction initiatives, improved building acoustic and thermal performance, and also helped to make environments safer places. Here's to the next century of plasterboard.

FIND OUT MORE  
[www.thefis.org](http://www.thefis.org)

## Calendar of events



### FIS Awards Lunch 2018

The Dorchester Hotel, London  
5 June 2018

### FIS Scottish Awards Lunch 2018

Trades Hall of Glasgow  
28 September 2018

### Members' Meetings 2018

Please see [www.thefis.org/events](http://www.thefis.org/events) for details

## Welcome to new FIS members

### Keylon Interiors

[www.keyloninteriors.co.uk](http://www.keyloninteriors.co.uk)  
London and South East specialists in drylining, carpentry, painting and decorating.

### Bournes of London Projects

[www.bolp.co.uk](http://www.bolp.co.uk)  
Interior office fit-out and refurbishment: refresh works to full design and build.

### Endeavour Recruitment Services

[www.endeavour-recruitment.co.uk](http://www.endeavour-recruitment.co.uk)  
Suppliers of contract site personnel to the construction industry.

### Chalkstring

[www.chalkstring.com](http://www.chalkstring.com)  
Providers of specialist software for financial aspects of construction projects.

### SBR Refurbishment

Providers of drylining, plastering, joinery, MF ceiling, suspended ceiling and tiling services.

### MP Drywall

01525 720789  
Offering drywall, rendering, plastering and screeding services to the sector.

### Protektor UK

[www.protektor.co.uk](http://www.protektor.co.uk)  
Providing an extensive range of galvanised, stainless steel and PVC products.

## Pexhurst refurbishes The Chocolate Factory

Pexhurst was contracted by Workspace for the refurbishment of The Chocolate Factory in Wood Green, North London, a former 19th century sweet and chocolate factory that now provides inspirational office and studio space for its many creative tenants.

This 20-week project saw Pexhurst fully refit the office space, reception, toilet and cafe while introducing shared common spaces to attract local businesses.

Design features include grit-blasted walls, with lighting also playing a key role in the interior design. In the cafe and reception, festoon lighting was introduced, hanging from coloured cords to provide a fun element.

The new reception area also sees restored scaffold boards used as a wall finish to complement the brick walls. Offices and breakout spaces have energy efficient LED ceiling lights to create bright



spaces to work in, and all toilet facilities have also been completely refurbished to a very high level but keeping with the industrial look.

FIND OUT MORE

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

## Shaw acquires Scottish carpet tile manufacturer, STS

Flooring company Shaw Industries Group has acquired Scotland-based carpet tile manufacturer Sanquhar Tile Services (STS).

Shaw's acquisition expands the group's carpet tile footprint to meet the needs of its global customers, complementing the company's carpet tile manufacturing facilities in Cartersville and Adairsville, Georgia, USA, and in Nantong, China.

STS, a long-established and important carpet tile manufacturer in the UK, will continue to serve its

customers as part of Shaw's commercial flooring division. STS's established and experienced leadership team and associates will continue to operate the business as part of Shaw.

Shaw Contract is the group's UK brand, providing carpet tile, broadloom, resilient, porcelain and hardwood to commercial sectors.

FIND OUT MORE

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

## Portview send best wishes with charity donation



Generous employees at Belfast-based Portview Fit-Out have donated more than £18,000 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation to help grant the wishes of seriously ill children across the UK.

The fit-out specialist raised £18,350 by organising a series of charity raffles, social events and sport competitions throughout 2017. Portview also donated 10 GoPro cameras and accessories to Make-A-Wish so that families can capture the wish experiences of their loved ones on film.

## New glass partitioning service from Tapper Interiors

Tapper Interiors has unveiled its new glass partitioning division's website, [www.glass-partition.co.uk](http://www.glass-partition.co.uk). This new online service, which launched on 1 January, is set to speed up the process of getting quotes for glass partitioning installations for both large commercial schemes and smaller projects.

The website provides small-scale developers and architects of larger endeavours with the ability to pick a basic online layout and tailor it to their dimensions, providing the ability to create either a simple room or a full floor within a building and then specify the options for an instant quote.

With 30 years' experience of supplying glass partitioning, Tapper Interiors recognised that customers running small-scale developments and residential projects need the flexibility to experiment with project specs and different layouts while still being able to enjoy a fast turnaround on quotes.

FIND OUT MORE

[www.glass-partition.co.uk](http://www.glass-partition.co.uk)

## Scotwood Interiors fits out creative headquarters

East Kilbride-based Scotwood Interiors has completed the fit-out of new offices for digital design and creative company The Leith Agency, in Edinburgh.

Scotwood was working with commercial property consultants and long-term clients HK Surveying and Design (HKSD),

who were commissioned to design the new headquarters and create the 'defurbished' desired aesthetic using reclaimed materials synonymous with the local area and its heavy manufacturing history.

Jim Scott of Scotwood explained what was involved in the fit-out: "The design involved stripping out existing flooring and suspended ceilings to leave exposed services with new LED lighting and adaptation of the existing heating system.

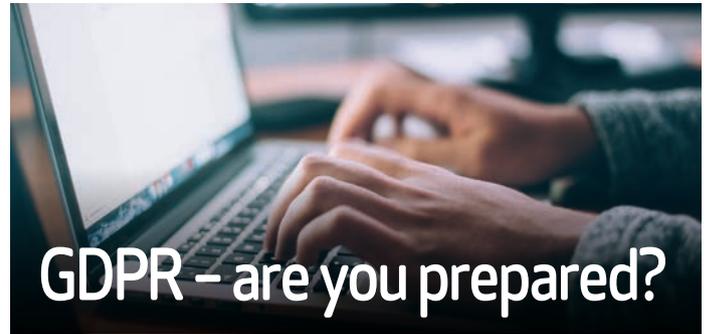
"We created meeting rooms with a mixture of glazed and solid partitions with laminate doors, and bespoke features such as reclaimed scaffold board feature walls. The new kitchen and breakout area again used bespoke industrial style finishes to maintain the industrial feel."



IMAGE CREDIT: Renzo Mazzolini Bureau

FIND OUT MORE

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



As of 28 May, the EU General Data Protection Regulation, commonly referred to as GDPR, comes into effect and replaces the current Data Protection Act (DPA).

Many of the GDPR's main concepts and principles are much the same as those in the current DPA, so if your company is complying with the current law then most of your approach to compliance will remain valid. However, there are new elements and significant enhancements to be aware of.

FIS has put together a useful document to help members and the sector focus on the key changes and to provide quick links to the information available. The article includes an outline of what GDPR covers; who enforces GDPR; who, in your company, needs to be aware of GDPR; and some key steps to take before 28 May.

Have a look today and take action now.

FIND OUT MORE

[www.thefis.org/are-you-ready-for-gdpr](http://www.thefis.org/are-you-ready-for-gdpr)

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