

SPECFINISH

The magazine of FIS representing finishes and interiors



FIS Scottish Awards - winning projects celebrated

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FIS

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D V McColl took Gold in the Suspended Ceilings category at the FIS Scottish Awards for its project at Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock Campus.

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FIS votes 'no' to continuing CITB levy

Leading trade organisation FIS, which is also a CITB consensus federation, has voted to reject the CITB's levy proposals.

FIS canvassed its members at a series of regional and special interest group meetings which culminated in a poll of members during September. FIS members voted by 60 per cent to 40 per cent to reject the CITB levy proposal. Turnout was 13 per cent.

David Frise, chief executive at FIS, said: "The vote reflects the views and opinions of FIS members over a sustained period. SMEs in particular are not engaging effectively with training and skills because of the complexity of the grant system and its perceived cost. On average, our members receive 35p back in grant for every pound in levy paid. It's not surprising, therefore, that members do not see

a benefit in continuing with the CITB levy system.

"We conducted an extensive Training Needs Analysis with members earlier this year. This found that the problem of skills shortages will be compounded by an ageing workforce, insufficient new entrants into the sector and the impact of Brexit because high levels of non-UK labour are prevalent.

"FIS supports the Build UK call for urgent reform of the CITB and will continue to help members develop effective skills and training programmes that attract new entrants into our sector and deliver the qualified workforce our industry both needs and wants."

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www.specfinish.co.uk

Construction moves into reverse gear

The IHS Markit/CIPS UK Construction PMI data covering September revealed a difficult month for the UK construction sector as a sustained drop in new work led to the first reduction in overall business activity since August 2016. Survey respondents attributed the drop in workloads to fragile confidence and subdued risk appetite among clients, especially in the commercial building sector.

The seasonally adjusted PMI registered 48.1 in September, down from 51.1 in August and below the crucial 50.0 no-change threshold for the first time in 13 months, signalling the fastest decline in overall construction output since July 2016.

Tim Moore, associate director at IHS Markit and author of the IHS Markit/CIPS Construction PMI, said: "A shortfall of new work to replace completed projects has started to weigh heavily on the UK construction sector. Aside from the soft patch linked to spending delays around the EU referendum, construction companies have now experienced their longest period of falling workloads since early 2013.

"Fragile client confidence and reduced tender opportunities meant that growth expectations across UK construction are also among the weakest for four-and-a-half years. At the same time, cost pressures have intensified, driven by supply bottlenecks and rising prices for imported materials."

The worst-performing category in recent months has been commercial development, with house building the only broad area of construction activity to register an expansion in September.

SIG plc announces new chairman appointment

SIG plc has appointed Andrew Allner as a non-executive director and chairman with effect from 1 November 2017.

Andrew Allner is currently chairman of Marshalls plc, The Go-Ahead Group plc and Fox Marble Holdings plc, and a non-executive director at Northgate plc. Mr Allner will resign from the Marshall's Board once a new chairman has been recruited and is in position.

Retiring chairman Leslie Van de Walle said: "I would like to welcome Andrew to SIG. He brings with him a wealth of both listed company and building products sector experience to lead the Board through the next stage of the company's development and I know that I am leaving SIG in very good hands."

Meinie Oldersma, group chief executive, said: "On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Leslie for his service over the last seven years. He has shown strong leadership and made a valuable contribution to the group. We extend him every good wish for the future. I would also like to welcome Andrew to SIG and look forward to working with him."

Mr Allner said: "I am delighted to be joining SIG. It is a company with a long history, loyal employees, leading market positions and significant potential.

"I look forward to working with Meinie and the Board to improve the performance of the business for the benefit of our customers, employees and shareholders."

FIND OUT MORE

www.specfinish.co.uk

FIND OUT MORE

www.sigplc.com

CCF delivers strong half year for Travis Perkins

Travis Perkins plc has revealed that revenue grew by 3.5 per cent in the first half of 2017, and by 2.7 per cent on a like-for-like basis. However, adjusted operating profit was 2.1 per cent lower at £190 million, largely due to the challenging Plumbing & Heating market and recent investments, including in information systems. CCF delivered a standout performance in the Contracts Division.

John Carter, Travis Perkins' chief executive, said: "We executed our plan well and delivered a solid overall performance in the first half of 2017 against a challenging market backdrop of pronounced input cost inflation and market volatility. The robust growth and outperformance in our Contracts and Consumer divisions build on strong customer propositions and successful investments in those businesses."

The Contracts Division, which is home to CCF, delivered strong sales growth at 8.3 per cent and 9.1 per cent on a like-for-like basis. All businesses demonstrated excellent growth, with CCF the standout performer.

FIND OUT MORE
www.ccfstd.co.uk



#iBuiltThis2017 – winners announced

FIS announced the four winners of its #iBuiltThis2017 social media competition at UK Construction Week last month.

Architect and host of Channel 4's Amazing Spaces George Clarke joined FIS and sponsors to announce the three age category winners of #iBuiltThis2017 along with a special Judges' Award for Excellence.

Emily Ash (pictured) was named as the winner in the 14 to 18 age group for her entry featuring wall and cavity synoptic testing.

TURN TO PAGE 19 FOR THE WINNING ENTRIES
www.thefis.org/skills-hub/i-built-this

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Editor's column

Positive attitudes

If you believed every politician and economist, you'd be a nervous wreck and suffering palpitations throughout the day. You'd also be none the wiser about how to position your business for the future. For those with a positive mental attitude, there is an exciting future ahead, but, what it will be and where it will take us are the big questions.

On one side we hear the phrase 'skills shortage', while on the other, forecasters start to see the market weakening. However, in the finishes sector, specialists tell me forward workload is strong and they are becoming more selective in what they bid for. More and more are adopting the mantra of turnover for vanity and profit for sanity.

Skills is a big topic this month. The industry has voted to allow the CITB to continue collecting levy (see page 18). It faced a blizzard of criticism and FIS members voted 'no' against its proposal to continue the levy. Fifty years ago, CITB was created to plug the skills gap, yet today we still face a skills crisis. Despite the calls for reform, there is little in the way of strategy to show how, as CITB promises, it is actually going to change.

The CITB concept is a good one but, if I was only getting 35p in every pound I spent on training, I would question its value. CITB is drinking in the last-chance saloon and if it does not start meeting its objective, and deliver the skills that a modern industry demands, then it surely faces the axe in three years.

Specialist contractors in the supply chain who are careful and flexible have the ability and skills to react to new and profitable opportunities. Fail to change or ignore new ways and you could be left behind. Just take a look at plastering on page 14. This historic craft is continuing to evolve, not just to meet established tastes, but to find new and more productive ways of working.

If you read the Balfour Beatty Innovation 2050 report and have been keeping up with the Digital Built Britain initiatives, you'll learn about how technology is going to change the sector in the future on page 16. Many say that they want to change and introduce new technology; however, our industry is inherently conservative and fears change. Remember – positive thinking brings positive results.

Adrian JG Marsh
Editor

Preparing for the future

'Winter's coming' is a well-known phrase to all fans of the TV series Game of Thrones and while we wait for the final series of this long-running saga, you could be tempted into thinking that this could equally be applied to the construction industry as it recorded a reduction in activity for the first time since the EU referendum.

The Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply survey reported a fall in commercial construction projects. Our own Noble Francis, economics director of the Construction Products Association, was quoted in the Financial Times as saying: "Concern regarding demand for high-profile office space from the financial sector has led to a lack of new projects to replace the existing projects as they finish."

On the face of it, this is not good news and is reflected in the mixed messages coming from members on the state of the market. The political uncertainty stemming from the election and Brexit is bound to have an impact at some point on construction output. There is growth in housing and infrastructure but away from the urban centres and, in particular, London, Manchester and Birmingham, things are less buoyant. Yet even with an adjustment downwards, construction is still a very big industry and many foreign investors will continue to see the UK as a safe place to invest. So, although there is uncertainty ahead, there is still – and will continue to be – a lot of work in the year ahead.

We still have the skills issue to deal with and that is not going to get better anytime soon. Our new status as a CITB consensus federation allowed members to register a resounding 'no' to CITB in the recent

survey. This does not mean CITB and the levy is going to disappear anytime soon but, crucially, our sector has clearly registered its discontent with the status quo and that message has been heard loud and clear. We will now start the process of helping to reform CITB but this will need you, the levy payers, to engage in that process and ensure we get the sort of skills deal we want.

As I write this, FIS is heading into new territory in the next couple of weeks. We are exhibiting at UK Construction Week and London Build for the first time. We are looking forward to promoting the work of our members through the stand and in a series of conference presentations on technical standards and skills.

We are also in the final preparations for the conference on 9-10 November. We have a stellar line-up of speakers who can cut through some of the uncertainty you must be feeling about the market with talks on what is going to happen to Building Regulations post-Grenfell and tips on making your business more profitable by reducing errors and defects. All that and a great social programme of networking. We particularly want you to bring your future leaders to the conference; there is a cracking deal for under 35s and a great session for them on how to use social media to promote your company.

Finally, one of my favourite events of the year, the Scottish Awards, is again upon us. Another sell-out event! Well done to all who entered and congratulations to those who picked up awards.

DAVID FRISE
FIS chief executive
www.thefis.org

SFS... are you bricking it?

Use of sheathing boards as part of a through-wall construction with timber or steel frame systems (SFS) is not a new concept. Most will be confident in the competent installation of sheathing boards in these applications, but given the wide range available across the market, **John Taylor**, technical director at Euroform Products, explains why the installation method for this external finish needs careful attention.

Regardless of which external wall finish is used, there is an ever more demanding requirement for sheathing materials to be not only quicker to install, but also capable of contributing towards securing other elements within the facade system.

The challenge where a brick facade is concerned is that not all sheathing boards have pull-out capability while remaining workable. Those that do provide adequate

pull-out performance are able to act as a potential contributor to securing back any thermal insulation.

Importantly, sheathing materials better suited to SFS are medium density to help install speed. It is this density which enables the product to be 'scored and snapped' as opposed to using sawing equipment on-site.

While these types of sheathing boards provide practical on-site

benefits, when using with SFS, particular attention must be paid to the expansion gaps required and the fixing types used.

It sounds like common sense, but few realise that fixing types specified are not just 'recommended'; the sheathing board will have been systematically tested for factors, e.g. loading and fire performance, using the specified fixing type. Any deviation from fixing type or profile

of fixing methodology means the installation does not comply with the specification tested – and performance cannot be guaranteed.

Unlike facades, where the carrier rail and SFS will generally take the load of the cladding tiles or panels, with brick, the sheathing board plays a more integral role in the performance of the overall wall build-up.

It is therefore essential that installation guidelines are followed – with attention to fixing type, profile, expansion between board joints and edge fixing distances.

The trend of using SFS with brick is not expected to decline anytime soon, which makes it a real opportunity for contractors. So, if you're bricking it... make sure you're fixing it right.

JOHN TAYLOR

Technical director
Euroform Products

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Armstrong Ceilings wins the Mason seal of approval

Canopies by Armstrong Ceiling Solutions have been specified for new-look common areas in a Royal Masonic Benevolent Care home in Porthcawl, near Cardiff.

Some 240 Optima L white mineral canopies were retro-fitted throughout the corridors to meet the brief from the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution Care Company, a registered charity, to raise the quality of the ceiling finish in a cost-effective way without losing access to the existing surface-mounted installations.

The 40mm-thick Armstrong Optima L 1200mm x 1200mm canopies feature excellent sound absorption, light reflectance of 87 per cent and fire reaction performance to Euroclass B-s1, d0. They are also fully recyclable.

Armstrong worked closely with Fagerhult Lighting to integrate its Discovery EVO wireless E-Sense Move lighting solution at the care home.

www.armstrongceilings.co.uk

A safer and easier way to lift board into a building



Starke Arvid has unveiled a new plasterboard Telehandler Lifting Frame so that on-site workers can avoid awkward lifting and working positions, while simultaneously optimising on-site workflow.

The Telehandler Lifting Frame enables wall board to be transported and lifted lengthways directly into a building. This is an effective solution where space or access is tight and especially useful for sites without hosts hand cranes. It eliminates having to manhandle each board into a building.

www.starkearvid.co.uk

Westgate Oxford installs Kingspan Kooltherm

Kingspan Kooltherm K106 Cavity Board has been installed as part of the £440 million redevelopment of Westgate Oxford, a retail and leisure destination in the city centre.

The development reflects the surrounding Oxford architecture, with an articulated brick facade and a focus on long-term robustness, quality and endurance. This concept was carried throughout the project, leading to the selection of the Kingspan Kooltherm K106 Cavity Board to ensure the building achieved a high level of thermal performance within a minimal cavity width.

The rigid insulation board was installed on the stair cores at each level. It has a thermal conductivity of just 0.018 W/m-K, while its water-tight, vapour-open polypropylene fleece outer facing allows it to be installed with a 10mm residual cavity, making it suitable for projects where developers want to meet demanding U-value targets without moving away from preferred cavity sizes or reducing the internal space.

www.kingspaninsulation.co.uk

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Siniat upgrades Weather Defence

Plasterboard system specialist Siniat has launched the next generation of its Weather Defence 2G sheathing board, doubling the amount of time it can be left safely exposed on frame from six to 12 months before final cladding is installed.

Designed and tested at its divisional parent company Etex Building Performance's Innovation and Technology Centre in Avignon, France, Weather Defence 2G can be used to quickly weatherproof a building during the construction phase, allowing interior trades to commence work faster and boost productivity on-site.

Weather Defence 2G contains a specially formulated gypsum core encapsulated in a tough, coated mat facer, giving the material superior water-resistance and weatherproofing while offering the lightweight qualities of plasterboard.

The product is certified Euroclass A1 non-combustible and is compliant with Approved Document B (fire safety) of current Building Regulations, including for use on structures above 18 metres.

www.siniat.co.uk



Sektor extends ceiling range

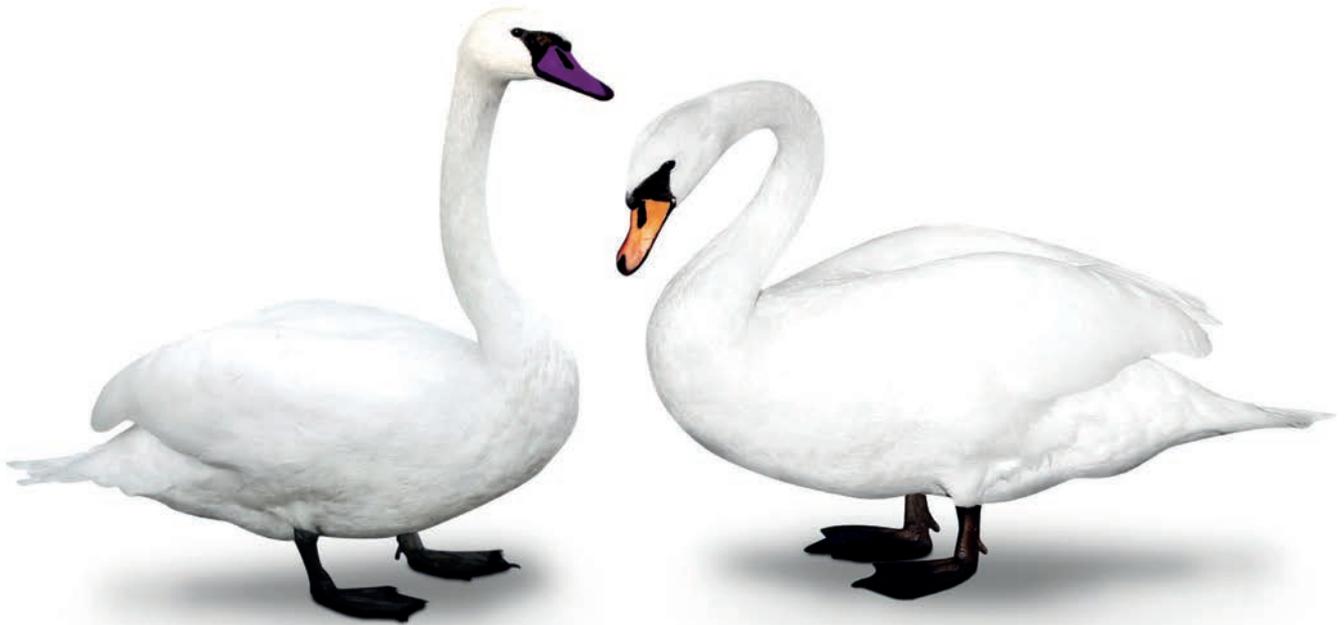
Sektor, the interiors solutions brand exclusive to CCF, has introduced new mineral, metal and lighting products to its ceilings range.

The range has grown Sektor's acoustic offering with two new fleece-lined mineral tiles in either Class A (Pearlstone Alpha) or Class C (Pearlstone) sound absorption rating. This complements the existing Sektor Sahara, Spintone and Puretone mineral tiles to cater for projects that require heightened sound attenuation and absorption performance qualities.

Three new Sektor Forte metal tiles – suited to sleek city and premium commercial spaces – have also been added as clip-in, lay-in and perforated options.

Two new Sektor Lumos LED lighting panels, in a warm (4,000k) or cool white (6,000k) effect, complete the extended offering. This slimline lighting range is new to Sektor and fits seamlessly into suspended ceilings.

www.sektorinteriors.com



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Hunter Douglas fills the void at airport

Hunter Douglas ceiling systems have been installed in the main halls as part of the development of Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport.

The BXD Multipanel ceiling collection is available in three heights and widths to make it possible to create highly functional and beautifully engineered 3D designs. The 'BXD' ceiling panel (height 64mm) comes in widths of 30mm, 80mm and 130mm and can be specified in combination with the 'B' panel (height 15mm) and the 'BD' panel (height 39 mm).

The ceiling system, which is well-suited to projects with large roof voids, has 20mm joints that can be left open or closed. In addition, Hunter Douglas's Luxalon Light Lines solution can be integrated to add practical and dimensional qualities within the ceiling design.

www.hunterdouglas.co.uk

Knauf Insulation secures industry standard for responsible sourcing

Knauf Insulation has achieved the BES 6001 standard for responsible sourcing practices across the glass and rock mineral wool products manufactured at its sites in St Helens, Cwmbran and Queensferry.

The Building Research Establishment's BES 6001 standard is achieved by businesses that demonstrate a responsible approach to their manufacturing processes, including the sourcing of materials, how products are manufactured and waste prevention.

As part of its commitment to sustainability, Knauf Insulation uses recycled materials across its products and has also developed a sustainable binder – ECOSE Technology – for its glass and rock mineral wool products with no added formaldehyde, acrylics or artificial colours.

John Sinfield, managing director at Knauf Insulation, said: "As a business that plays a leading role in the built environment, we are continually aiming to minimise risk within our supply chain. BES certification is the latest step towards achieving this."

www.knaufinsulation.co.uk

New jointing cement and compounds from Tradeline

Tradeline, the range of professional drywall solutions exclusive to CCF, has developed a new range of jointing cement and compounds to help the trade achieve a seamless finish on projects.

Launched last month, the range suits a variety of specification requirements and includes a convenient Ready Mixed Joint Cement, suitable for full taping and jointing, and an air-drying Joint Cement, ideal for the completion of large areas of plasterboard tapered joints.

These are in addition to a new Joint Filler, designed for bedding tapes and filling plasterboard joints, and an innovative lightweight Quick Fill jointing compound. Both products have a 90-minute setting time, making them ideal for projects that require same-day completion.



www.tradelinedrywall.com

Weberfloor smooths the way at refurbished Flitwick HQ

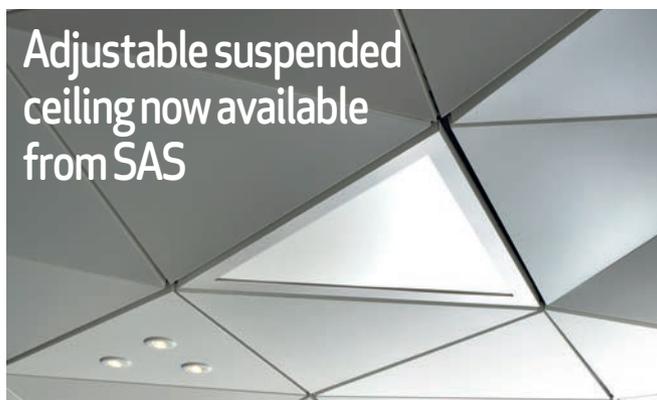


Weberfloor products have been used at a major refurbishment at the Saint-Gobain Weber HQ in Flitwick, Bedford, which has involved the renovation of 240m² of industrial and commercial floor space.

The Flitwick warehouse project involved the demolition of the old training workshop to make way for a new product storage area. Here, the floor area has been pre-treated and primed with weberfloor 4716 primer, designed to achieve a thin but tight membrane on all substrates prior to application of weberfloor products. Weberfloor 4160 industry top industrial floor screed, a BS 8204 compliant rapid hardening and self-smoothing screed, was then applied to 10mm.

In a separate open-plan office area, a slip membrane was installed to create a floating floor and effectively de-bond from the existing substrate. This was then reinforced with alkaline-resistant weberfloor 4945 glass fibre mesh. Fibre-reinforced weberfloor 4310 fibre flow was then applied to a thickness of 25mm.

www.netweber.co.uk



Adjustable suspended ceiling now available from SAS

SAS International has introduced SAS900 Polynode, the UK's first adjustable nodal suspended ceiling. The system's multi-faceted polyhedral surfaces are formed by simply adjusting the height of the suspension points.

Conceived to meet the increasing international demand for complex ceiling surfaces, Polynode delivers standout feature installations. Simple equilateral triangle tiles create a near infinite variety of polyhedral ceiling forms. However, while the system is drawn as standard with triangular tiles, any number of simple polygonal shapes can be manufactured. The patent-pending nodal system also has the flexibility to be used on ceiling-to-wall transitions.

Integrating lighting and other services, Polynode offers full hinge-down void access and up to class A acoustic absorption. The ceiling is available in the full range of PPC RAL colours as standard, with special-effect finishes and bespoke perforations also offered.

www.sasintgroup.com

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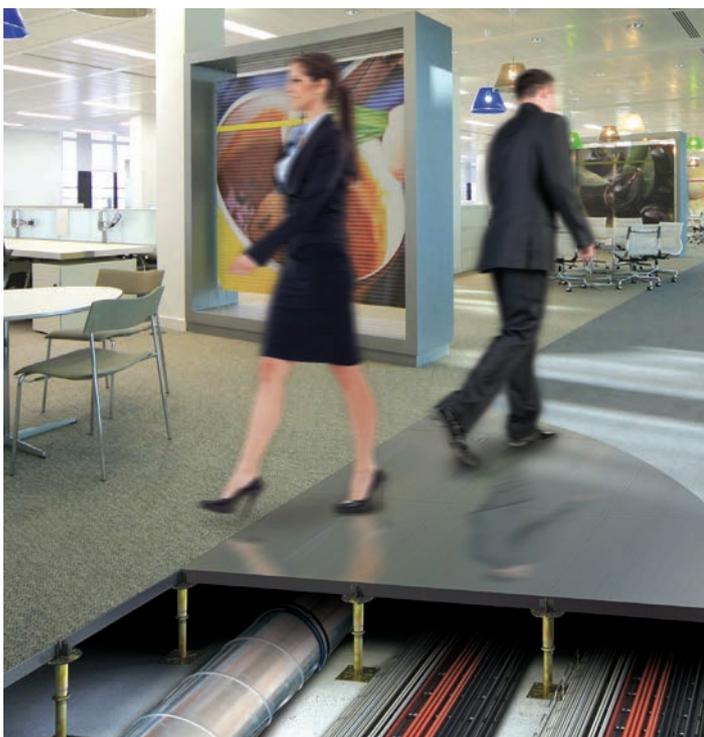
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Floors: different types for different requirements

A floor is a floor, isn't it? FIS technical director **Joe Cilia** talks to four diverse suppliers of raised and access floors in our sector to explore the answer to the question.



One of today's often-specified commercial floors – raised access floors – were first conceived in the 1960s for distributing services to equipment rooms, housing very large mainframe computers. Back then, IBM and the BBC were among the pioneers of raised access floors, which sometimes were no more than sheets of board fixed to battens. Nowadays, raised access floors have evolved to include service ducts for simple cable management, power, fibre optics, voice, data, and heating ventilation and air conditioning.

The height of the under-floor void created is dependent upon the available slab-to-slab dimension and volume, and the type of low-level services. This can be anything typically from 50mm to 1200mm finished floor height.

Chipboard panels with a steel casing are the floors often seen as part of a Cat A fit-out and provide standard office grade performance levels. The steel provides a robust finish which can be used to take finishes using products with a magnetic backing such as timber. Loose-lay finishes can also be installed without the need for adhesives, with some using magnetic backing to tiles, or low-tack adhesives.

Phil Holmes, marketing manager at Kingspan Access Floors, said: "Kingspan offers steel-encapsulated panels with High Density Chipboard cores; however, there are products on the market with different cores such as MDF, calcium sulphate and cementitious cores."

With floors, a decision has to be made very early on as to which

method of specifying you wish to use, based on the requirements of your project and to what standard you require.

A floor system's performance can be measured in seven ways: load bearing (measured in Kilonewtons Kn); void depth and access; water resistance; fire performance; acoustic performance; thermal performance; and suitability for floor coverings.

Lindner Interiors' business development manager, Andrew Hudson, explained: "With many architects and developers wanting to move away from wet screeds within buildings, they are now considering calcium sulphate systems. The Lindner FLOOR and more system comprises modular panels that are manufactured from almost 100 per cent recycled materials and are supplied with pre-formed tongue and groove joints to the panel edges."

Floor loads from 2.5Kn up to 20Kn can be achieved using a single panel process. These can provide a solid platform and ideal base for the laying of hard floor finishes, such as natural stone, porcelain and timber.

Some floors are designed to deal with load, water resistance and sound performance but are not necessarily accessible. These are known as raised floors, with some manufactured from a by-product from coal fired power stations forming panels that can be bonded directly to sub floors or supported by steel pedestals. These systems provide several benefits to the main contractor and client, namely systems can be lighter than screeds, depending on depth of floor; quicker to install, as there are no drying times; and some systems can be supplied with water-repellent mixes, or enhanced acoustic properties, along with load-bearing capabilities of up to 20Kn.

Where Building Regulations ask that floors in fire-fighting lobbies are non-combustible, calcium sulphate systems can meet this performance criteria. There are systems that are impervious to water to ensure the floor will be stable, even under water deployed from sprinkler pipes. There are also systems that can be manufactured with preformed grooves to accommodate underfloor heating pipes.

The increase in high rise domestic construction has seen many uses for raised floors and flooring systems where it is important that they meet current Building Regulations, including Approved Document E (AD E) where sound transference from a floor to the dwelling below must be addressed. This includes impact and airborne sound transference.

Steve Knight, Knauf's business development director, said: "Manufacturers have come up with a number of ways to isolate the raised floor from the structural floor, and a sharp eye on the installation process is key to ensuring the dwelling will pass any site tests carried out under AD E."

One of the more unusual floors is made from recycled Polypropylene (plastic bottles). Keith Littler, national sales manager at Netfloor Systems UK Ltd, commented: "These panels are delivered with a moulded pedestal in place. Reducing the depth to 60mm makes them ideal where height and weight are an issue, such as with off-site and modular construction.

"The benefit of a no-fix system means they are being used in some historic buildings, such as old mill buildings which are being refurbished for commercial use but where glues and adhesives are banned."

All the manufacturers are environmentally conscious and have takeback or recyclable schemes for products at end of life.

Like with all products, there is a variety of options even within a manufacturer's range, so use the expertise available to ensure right product in the right place.

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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.

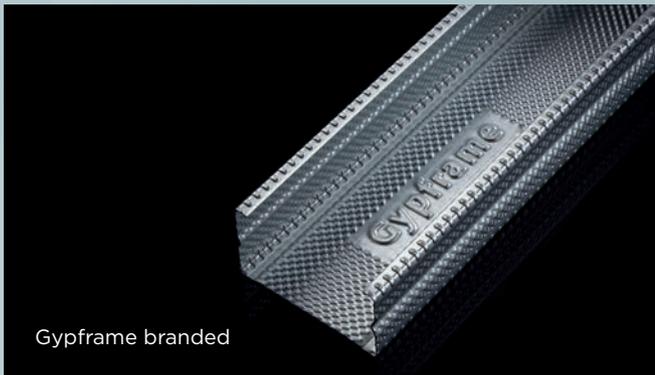
With longer legs and embossed corners giving added strength and making installation easier, the best just got better. Compatible with our current range, you can specify and install it in exactly the same way.



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When you're working at speed, you need all the help you can get. So we listened to what installers said and developed new and improved Gypframe.

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Derrick Sharp,
Roskel Contractors Limited



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To see what installers thought, visit www.british-gypsum.com/gypframe

Boosting productivity and reducing waste

Traditional plastering techniques still dominate the market; however, there is a slow but growing trend to adopt spray-applied finishing which claims to offer advantages around waste, speed, efficiency and quality. **Adrian JG Marsh** reports.



Ibis Hotel Gatwick used Beissier's Bagar Airliss G spray plaster. The refurbished 141-bedroom hotel was completed in 18 weeks and now boasts a new innovative room design and well-equipped rooms.

"We're not chasing traditional plastering contracts now and we're focusing on contracts where plaster can be machine applied," said Marvin Nash at north-west-based CLM.

"We've seen increasing use of spray-applied plaster on contracts across the North. There is less waste, the quality is as good as you can get and productivity is high. With such a skills shortage, it's the only way to tackle large-volume contracts."

Paul Bagley at PWB Drylining said: "We work towards the higher end of the market. We're traditional plasterers but we've noticed a push to airless spray plaster. It seems to be stronger in the North.

"In London and the South, there's no shortage of work and we've seen main contractors placing more packages under one single contract, so we've picked up work that involves screeding, drylining and plastering. A few years ago, this type

of work would often be broken up into separate contracts.

"There's a massive shortage of apprentices. In our experience, young people just don't seem to want to get their hands dirty these days," added Mr Bagley.

David Hill at Knauf agrees. He commented: "Fewer people are coming into the sector, meaning fewer people are being trained as plasterers. The workforce is getting older and there is the unknown with Brexit.

"In the UK, powdered plaster still dominates and we estimate spray represents only five percent of the market. However, we see opportunities for significant growth in the use of spray plaster and there is growing demand – it's very popular with off-site construction.

"Painters and decorators also love spray plaster. Because the finish is white, you can often

drop one coat from a decorators' package," Mr Hill concluded.

John Harford at Astra Property Services UK, a specialist fit-out contractor, said: "We recently completed the refurbishment of the Ibis near Gatwick Airport and the plastering element of the works was firmly on the project's critical path. With more than 9,000m² of walls and ceilings in total, spray plaster was the ideal solution."

Expanding on the benefits of spray plaster, particularly with pre-fabrication, Knauf's Clive Reeves added: "We've been working with off-site construction in the residential sector. Spray plasters are attractive because they're suited to factory conditions: there's less waste and the product quality is strong enough to withstand damage as modules are transported to site.

"One scheme with Swan Housing has seen high levels of productivity. Each module includes mechanical and electrical services, taped plasterboard and then spray-applied plaster in two coats. It's a production line that's constantly moving and the factory is producing eight pods every day. It's also in use on private developments with Crest Nicholson on a project near London Bridge.

"The productivity benefits of spray-applied plaster are there when there is a lot of regular and repetitive plasterwork required. We've found that for every 27 minutes of work, contractors are getting an extra 100m² of productivity. There is also better

water management and less waste." So, why is there not a lot more use of spray plaster?

According to Mr Reeves: "There's an element of fear in changing from traditional to new methods of working. Go to mainland Europe and it's commonplace. The market is more geared to spray plaster and the volumes are there and methods are established."

In Germany, commentators suggest that more than half of contracts use spray plaster finishing. It's also strong in Scandinavia, the Benelux countries and France.

Alexa Leclerc from Beissier concurs, highlighting: "Our spray plaster products are used widely [in France]. The housing market is bigger than the non-residential sector with specialist plasterers carrying out work and also painting and decorating contractors doing plastering work.

"We're also starting to see a trend towards direct contracts where main contractors want the same products used across their contracts, so they are buying direct and issuing the materials to their subcontractors for them to apply."

Tackling the challenges of workload with easier forms of installation is a route to boost productivity when faced with a skills shortage. The world is a different place today and hard-line traditionalists may need to accept that a faster technique that brings the necessary quality will grow in importance and can't be ignored.



The Island, Croydon, Surrey. An unfinished 20-storey block of one- and two-bedroom apartments has been transformed into a prestige apartment block with the aid of Knauf Airless Readymix Plasters.

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What next for technology?

Simon Lewis, a partner in the Construction and Engineering Team at Bond Dickinson, turns his attention to technology and some recent predictions.



Like it or not, the future seems to be rushing upon us with an ever-increasing speed. It is difficult enough to keep up with everything that has to be done on a daily basis, but every now and then it is useful to look around and see what is coming up. In that regard, the recently published report by Balfour Beatty, *Innovation 2050: A Digital Future for the Infrastructure Industry*, offers some interesting insights into the way the

industry is heading. While some of the report is, as you might expect, an advertisement for what Balfour Beatty is doing, it also usefully draws together various strands of technological development which are undoubtedly going to have an effect on everyone.

What, then, can we expect next?

The Balfour Beatty report contains a number of predictions for 2050. As is so often the case with things that look to the future, I suspect that some of these will not actually have taken place by then but that there will be other developments which will be far more advanced than we would dare to predict now. Here are some of the highlights:

- The shape of the industry will change significantly, with new business models, products and services.
- New jobs and industries will be created – and some will disappear, especially low- or zero-skill roles and those relying on repetition of tasks.
- Thinking only about design and construction will become an outdated concept as infrastructure becomes multi-functional.
- Construction will get faster, using 3D and 4D printing, and self-transforming objects which self-assemble.

Skills and agility

Inevitably, as technology continues to accelerate and affect the industry directly, the sector will need a more agile workforce with new skills. Among all this talk of ‘digital natives’ (defined as someone born or brought up during the age of digital technology) and the IT-savvy, technologically aware workforce, there lurks a spectre of what is often euphemistically referred to as ‘jobless growth’: companies increasing their profits without increasing the workforce. Further, while new jobs and new industries will be created, some will disappear. Humans are likely to be replaced in repetitive, unskilled jobs by robots and artificial intelligence (AI), and certain aspects of traditional industries such as manufacturing are likely to decline as new industries emerge. It is predicted that 65 per cent of children at school today will work in jobs that do not yet exist. There may be a greater need for more specialisation, particularly in skills that require technological input and understanding. Flexibility and desire to upskill regularly will become vital attributes in the jobs market.

This report also considers that the use of 3D and 4D printing will result in a significant increase in the speed and ease with which the construction process can take place. If (like me) you had no idea what 4D printing is, apparently it refers to self-transforming objects which alter their shape in response to a stimulus, such as a change in heat, sound or moisture. This could lead to the creation of smart objects that could react to changing environmental conditions. I am having trouble imagining what they might look like but no doubt somebody will show me sooner or later.

It is suggested that all surfaces will become potential interface points with computers, devices and networked technology. This will be part of new materials technologies bringing about changes in the way the built environment looks. Certain technologies already enable flooring to harness the energy of vehicles or people moving on surfaces and this is likely to become mainstream. In other words, infrastructure will end up fulfilling more than one purpose. The materials used in the construction process are likely to become far more flexible in their use and increasingly, via the Internet of Things (IoT), able to communicate with each other and with their owners via the use of self-healing and self-maintaining technologies.

Considering the challenges

Are there any challenges posed by these new developments? Obviously, there are. There will be a massive increase in energy consumption given the colossal amounts of data which will need to be processed. This means that infrastructure design will need to take account of climate projections and impacts, the use of renewable energy will need



to increase significantly and new ways of storing data will have to be developed. At the same time, processing and using the data in real time will get more difficult simply because there will be so much of it.

The inevitable debates around privacy versus the benefits of data are bound to become far more acute and, of course, cyber security will become even more important. We are already aware of the effects of hacking and cyber-attack. Earlier this year, the 'WannaCry' ransomware attack hit 150 countries – the worst attack ever on critical infrastructure. Regular assaults of this sort are likely to become the norm as new ways are found to exploit cyber weapons which target old, weak and under-protected software systems. Sadly, the NHS will continue to be a major target for this reason.

For the construction industry, this will pose a particular challenge. Large projects increasingly rely upon supply chains and contractors from a number of different countries collaborating on the collating and

sharing of large amounts of data. Internet-connected solutions and remotely accessible systems such as BIM open up the risk of cyber-attack. At particular risk are Building Management Systems on which many hospitals, government buildings, banks, research facilities and prisons are increasingly reliant. Cyber security as an aspect of everyday construction work will become increasingly prevalent.

What does this mean for the finishes and interiors sector? It is, of course, difficult to say with any precision, but ultimately, this is not a question of choice about whether we accept what is happening or not: it is going to happen anyway and the issue becomes how it is approached and what strategies are used to deal with it and profit from it. The key seems to be flexibility and a willingness to embrace technology rather than seeing it as something that is going to be a bad thing. Given its inevitability, the issue is how you cope, not whether or not you embrace technology at all.

Dispute resolution procedures

During a construction project, there are often complications. Generally, claims arising from a construction contract relate to an extension of time, additional work or variations, a claim for payment, poor workmanship or liquidated damages.

Most queries we receive through the FIS Legal Helpline relate to disputes of this nature and this article provides a brief introduction to the dispute resolution procedures that are available.

The main dispute resolution procedures are adjudication, arbitration, litigation and a type of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) known as mediation.

Adjudication is a statutory right that cannot be contracted out of. It is often seen as a quick and cost-effective means of resolving disputes and is generally considered to be successful in achieving its aim of maintaining cash flow

during the course of construction projects. It is appropriate for disputes relating to delay and disruption, extension of time claims and final account disputes. It is often included or referred to in construction contracts.

Litigation is the term used to describe proceedings in Court to enforce or defend a legal right. It can be settled by agreement between the parties before the trial but it usually involves applications being made at Court and Court hearings. Litigation can be lengthy, which can make it an expensive option.

Arbitration is an alternative to litigation. All parties must agree to submit the dispute to arbitration and the rights and obligations of the parties arise from the arbitration agreement itself. Arbitration proceedings are confidential and the parties have the choice of where the arbitration takes place. The decision of an

arbitral tribunal is final and binding.

Mediation is a form of ADR where the parties agree to appoint an impartial mediator to help resolve the dispute by facilitating discussions. This process is voluntary and is held on a 'without prejudice' basis so it cannot be referred to openly. If the parties reach a settlement, that is written down and the settlement agreement can be enforced in Court.

This note is just a very brief overview. If a dispute arises, you should obtain legal advice to understand your options and responsibilities. FIS members can call Bond Dickinson on the Legal Helpline, who will be happy to help.

FIND OUT MORE

kara.price@bonddickinson.com

0191 230 8860

Consulting on a new CITB levy

With the outcome of CITB's Training Levy Proposal consensus survey still fresh, **Helen Yeulet**, skills delivery director at FIS, considers what this could mean for skills and training in the sector.

After many years of trying as the FPDC and AIS, FIS was finally granted CITB consensus status this year, becoming what's known as a consensus federation. As a result, in September FIS conducted its first consensus survey as part of the CITB Training Levy Proposal. Some may see the resounding 'no', rejecting the levy (FIS members voted by 60 per cent to 40 per cent to reject the proposal), as somewhat ungrateful, but should we be surprised?

With only 35p of grant being returned on every pound of levy paid, this looks and feels like a poor return on investment for the sector. CITB don't like the argument to be about money being returned to levy payers, but, unfortunately, members do and voted accordingly. The interiors sector cannot see any correlation between the skills it needs to deliver on-site and the money paid in levy. Partly, this is due to business models that require great flexibility and the reliance on Labour Only Subcontractors, meaning that most of these are not able to claim grants on offer. The levy is frequently viewed as a tax with no benefits.

What is, therefore, surprising is the low turnout for the poll: only 13 per cent of eligible members voted! If you want something to change for the better, everyone needs to engage and ensure that you get the training and skills you need to run your business.

Marc Gray, CEO of Grays Dry Lining, commented: "We have spent a great deal of money on training. Of all the organisations we worked and partnered with, the most difficult to deal with was undoubtedly the CITB. And that list includes government department and ministers.

"For me, the CITB's systems are an unfathomable mix of unnecessary processes that suck your time, money and enthusiasm. I would love for the CITB to be an effective and equitable partner. Sadly, today, it is not. That we remain with the incumbent troubles me; is this really the best solution. It is the industry's money and it should be invested quickly and effectively. I don't believe the CITB is capable of doing either."

Despite FIS members rejecting the proposal, the industry as a whole has accepted it but with a very strong proviso that CITB embarks on significant reform as quickly as possible. A skills shortage is only set to worsen through an

ageing workforce, further exacerbated by the impending Brexit impact combined with the demand by government to build more houses – one million by 2020.

Industry blames CITB for not delivering and it is right to, but if a Training Board didn't exist, would employers truly invest all the levy money into appropriate training?

Industry needs to begin to take responsibility and accountability for the skills shortages, but it can't do that while CITB continues to act as the ever-present nanny. While the culture of ownership and the purse strings for skills sit within its hands, the industry cannot change.

What is the proposal? We're not sure! We're being consulted but we're still not clear on what it will really mean and how it will make sure the skills shortages are reduced. To drive change, it needs to be industry-led with agreed objectives that are backed by a clear, scoped and published plan. Involve industry in the delivery of a project like Go Construct and it has half a chance of success.

Dominic Tutt, managing director of Astins, said: "I very much hope that the recent consensus vote will serve as a reminder to CITB



of the need for it to change. I also believe that the current leadership of the CITB is very aware of this need for change.

"It's also evident that we, as a sector, need to lead more by investing in our people. Above all we, as industry, share the same common purpose as the CITB – namely to get more and better-skilled operatives and staff. Surely it is therefore incumbent on us all to overcome past challenges and current blockers (regardless of who is responsible) and get on with getting a qualified workforce."

In the knowledge that FIS has been tasked to attract new entrants and drive a difference, we want to sit down at the table with the rest of the industry AND CITB, and work together to resolve the skills shortages. Let's take time to develop a plan that addresses the key issues and agree the right timeline to deliver this to ensure that it can be a success. The sector needs change – but change cannot be delivered without all parties working with each other and not against each other.

As Bill Gates, Microsoft founder and former CEO, once said: "Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."



I built this... and I won!

FIS Skills' #iBuiltThis2017 competition ran on social media during September to attract young people and promote the construction industry as a career choice. The winners were announced last month at UK Construction Week. Read on to find out which 'build' caught the judges' eye.

Architect and host of Channel 4's Amazing Spaces George Clarke joined FIS and sponsors on stage at UK Construction Week to announce the three age category winners of #iBuiltThis2017 along with a special Judges' Award for Excellence. Well done to everyone who took the time to showcase their 'build' and congratulations to the finalists and winners.

FIND OUT MORE www.thefis.org/skills-hub/i-built-this



George Clarke (l) and Colin Teagle (r) of category sponsor Silver Trowel presenting the 19 and over award to Carwyn Jones for his project, The Dragon's Eye.



LEGOLAND Contest – Sponsored by Building Heroes

Age Group: 13 and under
Winner: Kendrick Long for his project
 New Three Little Pigs



St Pancras Renaissance Hotel Contest – Sponsored by Silver Trowel

Age Group: 19 and over
Winner: Carwyn Jones for his project
 The Dragon's Eye



iPhone 8 Contest – Sponsored by Home Builders Federation (HBF)

Age Group: 14 to 18
Winner: Emily Ash for her project
 Wall and Cavity Synoptic Testing



Judges' Award for Excellence – Sponsored by Nevill Long

Winner: Frankie Bicker for his lime and fibrous plastering restoration at the Royal Academy of Arts

Workplace psychology – communicating information and using influence effectively

This article on the topic of workplace psychology takes a look at how to communicate information more effectively and influence the behaviours of others at work.

Training plays an extremely important role in helping to raise health and safety standards. But simply presenting information to employees may not be enough to effect the change you want. Instead, you need to carefully consider how information is communicated – and, most importantly, how to positively influence your employees.

Workplace psychology – communication preferences

One of the keys to effective workplace communication is to understand what motivates your employees. What makes them tick? What do they like and dislike? What has worked – and hasn't worked – in the past?

Once you know how to relate to individuals, it becomes much easier to present information in a way that appeals to them. Some will be happy to read documentation, whereas others will take safety videos on board. And some will need on-the-job guidance.

Ultimately, it is your ability to tailor the way in which information is shared that will determine whether training is effective or not. It's not about you; your colleagues' preferences are the key factor in an effective conversation.

Use gentle persuasion

The communication preferences of your colleagues are not just important for training. Every discussion you have at work needs to take these factors into account to help you build rapport.

By building relationships, you will find it much easier to persuade colleagues to change the way they work. Gentle persuasion is much more effective than issuing ultimatums.

Add credibility, lead by example

'Practise what you preach' is more than an old saying – it's something you should be striving to achieve at work. Your employees watch you closely, checking to see if you hold yourself to the same standards you expect of them.

If you consistently adhere to safe working practices, your employees will notice. Not only will this raise your credibility, but it will also increase your powers of persuasion. Workers are much more likely to adopt desired behaviours.

Show respect

Managers face an additional challenge: do they want to be popular or do they want to earn the respect of their colleagues? Popularity is relatively easy to achieve, but it could also be an Achilles heel. You might tell the funniest jokes and always get people's attention while doing so, but do people also listen to the important safety information you share with them?

Respect is the twin of credibility. If people find you credible, they are much more likely to respect you. At which point they are easier to influence.

Line managers must invest time and effort into making themselves credible, and therefore respectable. And if the choice is between popularity and respectability, always go for the latter.

Listen carefully to what others say

Effective communication is a two-way process – even when you are trying to share information. You must listen to your colleagues before, during and after any discussion.

As well as better understanding the people you work with by listening carefully to them, you might also find that they may provide

additional insights that affect your plans. Always be open to suggestions – you don't have all the answers, so your colleagues can play their part in improving site safety too.

Finally, allow time and patience

Sharing information effectively and influencing people is not something that 'just happens'. You will need to invest time and effort cultivating trust and respect with colleagues. The investment will pay off, however, as your teams begin to work together more efficiently (and accident rates decline).

For more help on applying workplace psychology to improve standards of health and safety on your sites, please get in touch.

FIND OUT MORE

DAVID CANT

Veritas Consulting

www.veritas-consulting.co.uk



FIS Scottish Awards winners announced

FIS held its Scottish Awards Lunch last month at The Principal Edinburgh hotel where winners of the Scottish Awards were announced and presented by guest speaker and compere Bill Copeland.

In the Plasterwork category, it was David Fisher & Sons' (Edinburgh) heritage plaster project at Botanic Cottage, Edinburgh, that took Gold, the only award.

D V McColl took Gold in the Suspended Ceilings category, sponsored by Nevill Long, for its project at Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock Campus. Brian Hendry Interiors' work at The Control Room, Hunterston B Power Station, Ayrshire, was awarded Silver.

Worksmart Contracts' project at GHA Kingsway Court, Glasgow, picked up Gold, the only award, in the Partitioning category, which was sponsored by Ocula Systems.

In the Interior Fit Out category, sponsored by CCF, Gold was awarded to Veitchi Interiors for its extensive remodelling project at the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Glasgow, with Worksmart Contracts taking Silver for its fit-out at the Glasgow office of Ellis Whittam.



Sponsored by Minster, the Judges' Award Gold went to Worksmart Contracts for its refurbishment at the Gaiety Theatre, Ayrshire. Veitchi Interiors was awarded Silver for its work with New Student Accommodation, Haddington Place, Edinburgh.

Winner of the Apprentice of the Year Award, which was sponsored by Komfort Partitioning, was

Jordan McKay of Brian Hendry Interiors. Runner-up was Kieran Tarleton from Roskel Contracts.

CCF was the Gold sponsor for the Lunch with Forza Doors as Bronze sponsor.

FIND OUT MORE

www.thefis.org/events/fis-scottish-awards-lunch-2017



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Calendar of events



Plasterers' Training Awards
Plasterers' Hall, London
7 November 2017

FIS Conference 2017
Hanbury Manor, Hertfordshire
9 November 2017

FIS Golf Day 2017
Hanbury Manor, Hertfordshire
10 November 2017

FIS President's Lunch 2018
Plasterers' Hall, London
6 February 2018

FIS Awards Lunch 2018
The Dorchester Hotel, London
5 June 2018

Members' Meetings 2018
Dates to be confirmed

Welcome to new FIS members

SJP Contracts Ltd

www.sjpcontracts.co.uk
SJP Contracts specialise in the supply and installation of partitions, ceilings, carpentry, fire protection, SFS and cladding systems to provide a complete turnkey solution.

Willmott Dixon

www.willmott-dixon.co.uk
Willmott Dixon specialises in construction, residential development and property support services.

Brebur Ltd

www.brebur-ltd.co.uk
Brebur is a Yorkshire-based specialist drylining, plastering, suspended ceiling and SFS company that delivers projects nationally.

Safety Signs & Supplies

www.safetysigns.uk.com
A specialist supplier to both the construction and fit-out industry, Safety Signs & Supplies offer a single-source supply network with a nationwide coverage.

TimK-Construction

www.timk-construction.co.uk
TimK-Construction provides specialist drylining and suspended ceiling solutions to all sectors from high-specification residential developments to retail and healthcare projects.

William Smith Group 1832 Ltd

www.williamsmith.co.uk
Architextural, the new division of William Smith Group 1832, supplies architectural and window films.

Sussex and Surrey Partitioning Ltd

www.sussexandsurreypartitioning.co.uk
Sussex and Surrey Partitioning offers solutions from partitioning to mezzanine flooring.



ISG wins Sports Direct contract

ISG has secured a circa £5 million contract with Sports Direct to deliver its first new build outlet in Scotland, located close to the Glasgow Fort shopping destination. The retail development will house Sports Direct's retail businesses – including Sports Direct, Flannels, USC and an Everlast Fitness Club – under one roof.

The scheme comprises the refurbishment and reconfiguration of a former retail unit along with the construction of a three-storey steel frame extension, totalling over 180,000 sq. ft of retail space.

ISG will form distinct retail space for each of the retail fascias at the new Glasgow outlet. The striking design for the new unit includes a gullwing roof structure and extensive glazing and cladding panels, including coloured mosaic feature panels to the facade.

The construction is scheduled for completion towards the end of the year with the store fit-out due to commence early 2018.

FIND OUT MORE

www.isgplc.com

Horbury wins rainscreen cladding package

Horbury Facades, part of the Horbury Group, has secured a contract to design and install the innovative rainscreen cladding system for the new Digital Media Hub that forms part of the Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies on behalf of Nottingham Trent University.

The new building will feature the increasingly popular 'Corten' panel, which naturally weathers over time to produce a striking oxide finish that protects the building. The natural patina creates a protective coating that provides a highly durable, low maintenance and aesthetically pleasing facade. The use of Corten will complement the traditional red-brick build of the adjacent buildings.

Horbury Facades will work on behalf of main contractors Stepnells Ltd, with the building due for completion in summer 2018.

Adrian Storey, general manager at Horbury Facades, said: "This is an exciting contract win for our team. We have extensive experience of designing and installing facades created using Corten, which is a popular choice for use in urban and former industrial areas."

FIND OUT MORE

www.horburygroup.com

FIS President's Awards 2018 – open for entries

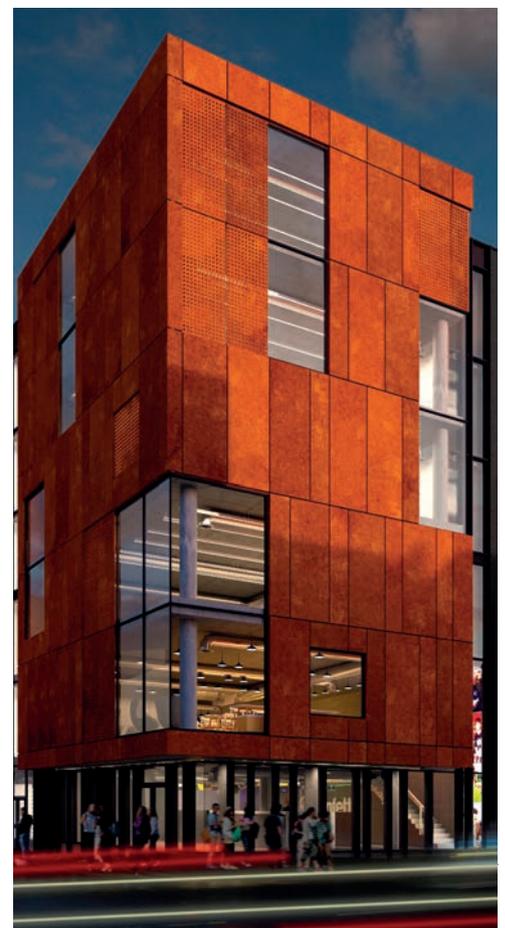
FIS members are being encouraged to enter into the 2018 FIS President's Awards.

Does your company employ someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the business? Do you have an apprentice who deserves recognition? As in previous years, there are four award categories – Apprentice of the Year, Outstanding Employee, Future Leader and Lifetime Achievement – and FIS is now accepting nominations from member companies.

Closing date for entries is 30 November 2017 with winners announced on Tuesday 6 February 2018 at the President's Lunch at Plasterers' Hall, London.

FIND OUT MORE AND ENTER

www.thefis.org/membership-hub/fis-awards



Instarmac achieves prestigious RoSPA Gold Medal Award

Instarmac Group has been awarded the coveted Gold Medal from RoSPA, an honour only given to those who achieve five consecutive Gold Awards in the society's annual Health and Safety Awards.

The awards are open to businesses and organisations of all sizes across a wide spectrum of industries and celebrate those who are committed to raising health and safety management standards.

The 24-strong judging panel measures an organisation's performance on areas including identification, assessment, prevention and control of health risks; wellness at work; communication of information; and active monitoring and reviewing of health performance; as well as considering specific activities that distinguish an organisation's approach to health and work.

RoSPA's chairman Michael D Parker CBE (pictured left) presented Instarmac's quality and operations manager, Darren Gough, with the award during a ceremony at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel.



FIND OUT MORE

www.instarmac.co.uk



Saracen completes refurbishment at English Speaking Union

Workplace consultant Saracen Interiors has completed a 6,000 sq. ft fast-track repair and refurbishment project for global educational charity the English Speaking Union (ESU) at its prestigious headquarters, just off Berkeley Square in Mayfair.

Work was undertaken on the ground floor and in the basement library to make good the damage caused by a leak. Painstaking care and attention was taken to ensure that all refurbishments met the high standards and quality of the current fitting of this high design Grade II listed building.

The project took just under five weeks to finish and was completed during office hours, with Saracen taking on board the need for its tenants to resume full occupancy as soon as possible.

FIND OUT MORE

www.saraceninteriors.com



Portview completes first kate spade new york flagship store

Portview Fit-Out has completed work on a new flagship store in Paris for American luxury accessory and lifestyle brand kate spade new york.

The opening marks the brand's celebrated arrival to France, following the successful launch of its Regent Street store in London last year, also fitted out by Portview.

Measuring 185 sq. m over two floors, the design scheme created by kate spade new york and Househam Henderson has contrasting white and grey terrazzo tiles, polished brass inlays and railings, and high-gloss counter tops. The sophisticated white colour palette cleverly draws the eye towards the colourful assortment of product categories.

Joinery and cabinet work were designed in the US and fitted by Portview. The unique lighting scheme sourced 'Sputnik' fittings from the US which were rewired for local currents, giving the store a distinctive American ambience.

Abigail Blumsohn, interior architect at Househam Henderson, commented: "The design of the two-storey boutique is distinctive and individual, with features ranging from neon signage and iconic patterned wallpapers, through to crown mouldings and crafted pilasters."

FIND OUT MORE

www.portview.co.uk

FIS appoints Joe Cilia as technical director

Joe Cilia has been appointed FIS technical director in recognition of his contribution to FIS and his expanding role. He was also recently appointed chair of the Construction Products Association (CPA) technical committee.



FIS chief executive David Frise said: "We have expanded our technical offering to members through an increase in our technical advice services and the introduction of more specialist groups covering sector-specific areas such as Steel Framed Systems. FIS is also heavily involved in the development of standards with BSI and our own best practice guides.

"Technical compliance will become increasingly important post-Grenfell and we want to help members meet this challenge."

Commenting, Joe said: "It has been a rewarding eight years as technical manager. We have seen more of our members engaging through the special interest forums and have more contact with BSI, RICS, RIBA and CPA where our members' voices are being heard. We plan to build on this going forward."

FIS also welcomes Dan Cook to the team as technical assistant to support Joe with all FIS technical activities. Dan is currently completing his PhD thesis.

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