

SPEC FINISH

FIS

The magazine of FIS
representing the finishes
and interiors sector

www.thefis.org

Incoming FIS president Helen Tapper

discusses her goals
while in office



Legislation

Why competence
is key to workforce
management

Skills and training

The Great Apprentice
- three top questions
answered

Technical

Sound advice
on acoustic
performance data

ACHIEVE UNFORGETTABLE FINISHES WITH SUBLIMATION

Rapid design and innovation propel us to keep moving forward. Architects and clients are continually pursuing the desire to enhance a space, this includes the design and functionality of ceilings. With the increase of new technologies and techniques currently being practiced, designers can achieve their ambitious design aspirations. One of these modern techniques which is growing in popularity is sublimation.

The sublimation process uses heat to transfer different patterns onto materials. Leading designer and manufacturer of metal ceilings, SAS International, has successfully employed this process to create remarkable product finishes for projects including Arndale Shopping Centre in Manchester and Muscat International Airport.

This finish technique enables colours and motifs to be embedded into any substrate to create blemish and chip-free surfaces of any texture and shade. Whether designers require a woodgrain finish to cultivate an 'organic feel' or long for a marbled ceiling to give that hint of luxury, sublimation is the perfect solution to craft a ceiling design that is attractive, durable and able to create an ambient environment. Suitable for perforated baffles, to modular tiles and suspended ceilings, sublimation can make any specifier's design dreams a firm reality.

SAS500 Auckland Airport, New Zealand



SAS500 Goshawk, Ireland

THE BEAUTY OF SUBLIMATION

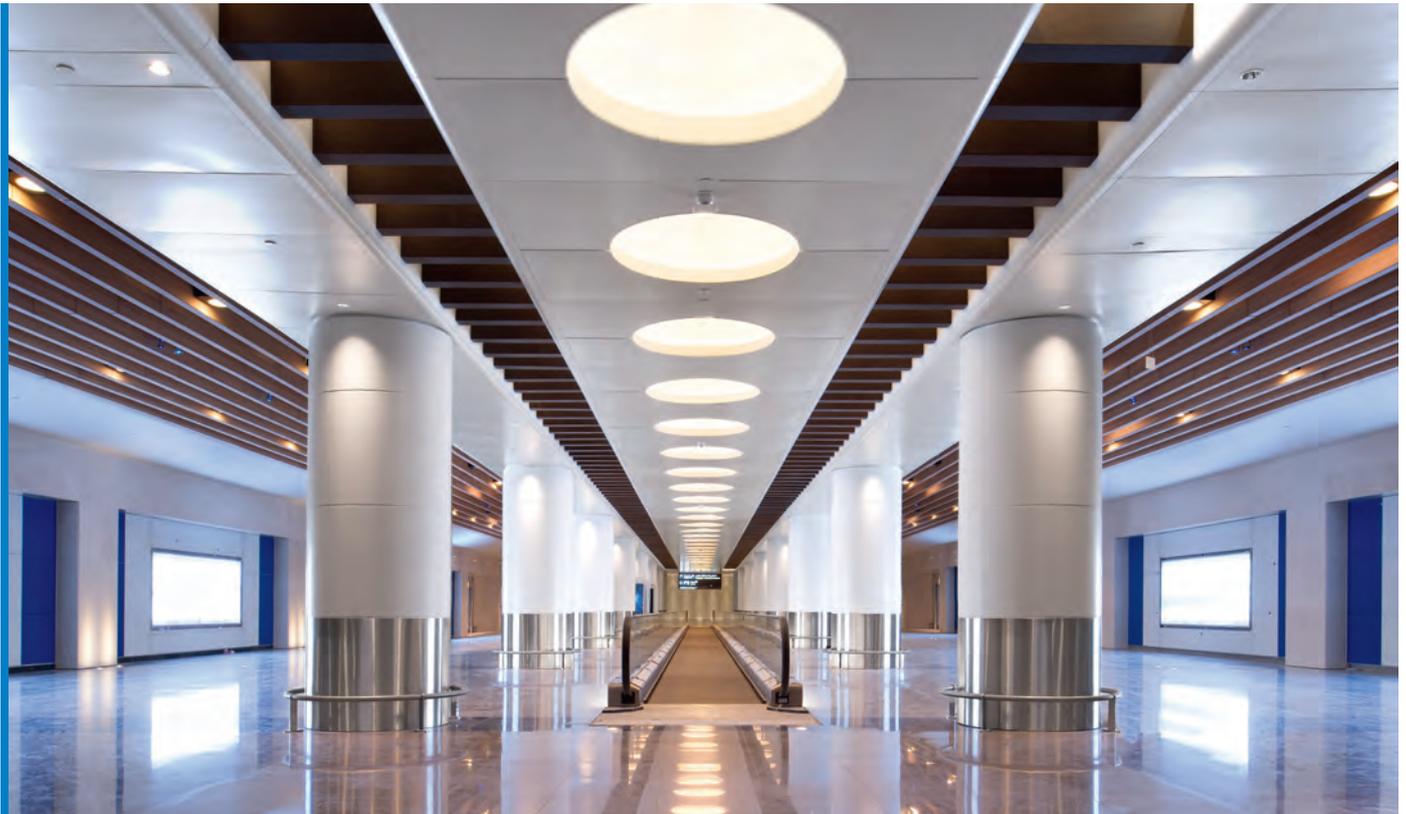
A feature sublimation champions is the ability to produce stunning interior finishes. But as well as creating enviable designs, sublimation can offer much more.

For instance, sublimation can imitate other finishes that tend to be more costly and weightier. Whether it is timber, marble, granite or any other decorative effect, sublimation enables specifiers to achieve a seamless, cost-effective, lightweight finish without compromise to quality or aesthetic. To assure the space maintains its quality, most manufacturers will also offer pre-coat finishes to add that all important durability factor.

Compared to its equivalents sublimated metal products provide better performance, as a result of their durability. Sublimation uses a process whereby the ink becomes part of the material, as opposed to forming a layer which sits on top. It is this which gives sublimation a reputation for producing durable finishes that assure the given product is fashioned to last.

As a result of its durable properties, sublimation can be employed in a variety of different sectors, from commercial offices to high-trafficked infrastructure projects. Being one of the most durable construction materials metal cannot be easily damaged, by using sublimated metal in infrastructure, architects can achieve a strikingly realistic wood-effect finish, while ensuring better acoustic performance and outstanding product life expectancy.

A design process hailed by the design community, sublimation is a sustainable, effective technique able to bring the most ambitious of ceiling designs into existence. So much so, it will go some way to being surpassed.



Transition Ceiling | Column Casing Muscat Airport, Oman

Welcome

SPEC FINISH

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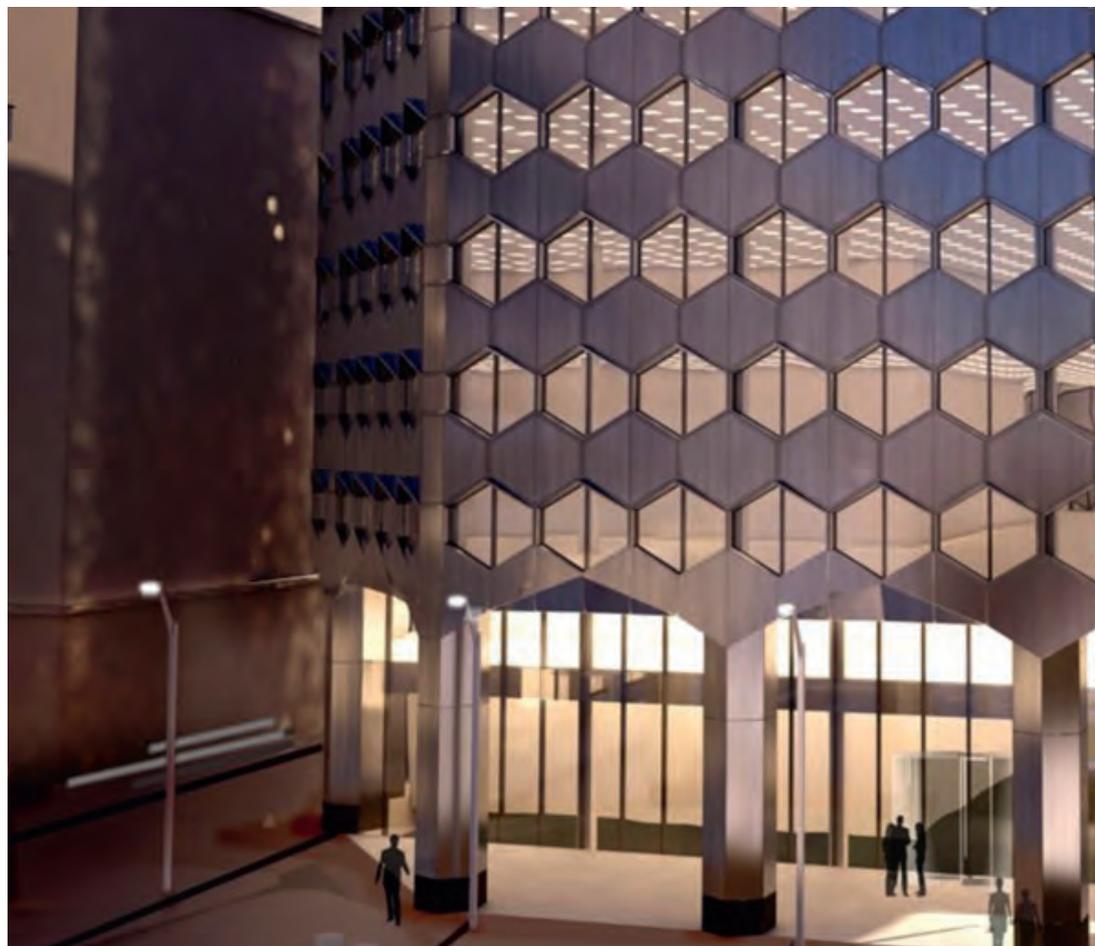
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WELCOME

Once more it's time to celebrate - this time the achievements of our FIS members in Scotland, as well as the successful launch of our new Acoustic Verification Scheme.

The FIS Scottish Awards took place at the InterContinental Edinburgh The George this year, with Scottish comedian Eric Davidson presenting well-earned certificates to those whose projects judges felt stood out the most. It was good to see so many members in attendance and to be part of the enthusiasm and celebratory mood and we bring you full details of the 2019 winners in this issue.

The launch of the Acoustic Verification Scheme is welcome news for members and will allow designers, architects and contractors to specify products, safe in the knowledge they will provide the acoustics performance claimed.

One person who's celebrating a successful personal outcome is the fireplace installer detailed in our legislation feature - but it could so easily have been a different outcome. Kizzy Augustin uses it to demonstrate why competence is key to effective workforce management.

Helen Tapper, our incoming president, took time out of her busy schedule to talk to me about what she hopes to achieve in her new role, and in our Contractors Corner section, we take a look at some of the myths and facts surrounding indemnity insurance.

Stephanie Cornwall

Editor



"It was good to see so many members in attendance and to be part of the enthusiasm and celebratory mood at the FIS Scottish Awards."



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EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS



Joe Cilia, FIS
Joe is the technical director at FIS. He provides support to members of the association, and works with relevant bodies on legislative and technical standards.



Kizzy Augustin
A health, safety, fire and environmental partner and solicitor advocate at Russell Cooke Solicitors, Kizzy provides strategic advice in response to incidents and preventative consultancy advice in relation to corporate policies and procedures to ensure compliance with key fire and health and safety legislation, as well as other associated regulations.



Amanda Scott, FIS
Amanda is sector skills engagement manager at FIS. She helps to organise and run skills clinics and identify areas where members would benefit from assistance and can share good practice.

QUALITY HEALTH SAFETY

RAISING THE BAR WITH PEOPLE IN OUR HEARTS

IAIN MCILWEE
Chief executive
Finishes and
Interiors Sector



The consultation around Raising the Bar, the competent people bit of the Hackitt Review, has been in full swing over the summer. FIS has and continues to support several of the working groups. Part of this process was attending a conference that brought together the initial conclusions of the various groups and I have to say there were a few times during it that I was squirming in my seat. Construction is complex and, often due to sequencing issues or design issues, we find ourselves with difficult decisions to make, priorities to manage and we don't always get it right - we can excuse some things, some common practices, but that doesn't make them right.

The legal definition of competency is covered in the magazine this month and I have written before about the formula for competence based on Skill, Attitude, Knowledge and Experience, but the focus through Raising the Bar is to ensure competency is at the heart of decision making within construction. This is about individual accountability and collective

responsibility; how do we all ensure that everybody in our supply chain is competent to do their job and when we pass the baton, make it as easy as possible for the next person to do the same in the relay race that is construction.

At the event we had interesting keynotes from MHCLG and Dame Judith Hackitt herself and they reinforced that regulation is only part of it, culture change is needed. It struck me as I listened to the lecture telling me that we must put people at the heart of the process, that this isn't enough. To really change culture we need to keep people in our hearts throughout the process, we have to care more deeply about safety and quality than we do about hitting budgets and targets, keeping the cost down and shaving a bit of time and money out of the contract. This is fine in theory, but in a backdrop of punitive contracts and decades of value engineering, where do you start!

I suspect part of the answer to this was given at the launch of the Interior Systems Installer Apprenticeship Standard. This is a huge opportunity to reconsider how we start people out in our sector and ensure

that we instil in them from day one the right values. Of all the feedback from the event, one comment stood out and gave me hope:

"I sat on the train and read every last word of the new apprenticeship scheme, and was gob smacked, you can tell it's written by people who live and breathe the dust, not guys in ties."

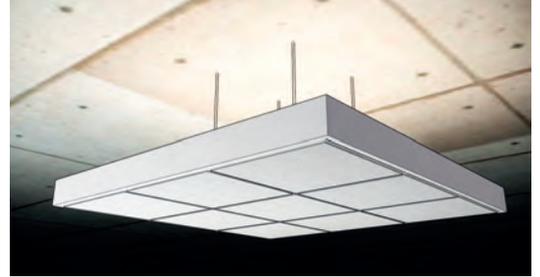
Speaking as "a guy who is often in a tie" it is encouraging to hear this feedback. What is different about this qualification is that this is an industry standard that has been developed by the industry for the industry. Our job at FIS is to ensure that the network exists and works to create a platform to collaborate in this way, to listen and make sure that the right voices are heard, to champion the core values set by the members of the FIS and to help raise the standards for those that strive to do it better. The great thing about this Standard is that it has that buy-in from the entire supply chain, from the suppliers, through the contractors of all levels. We are very excited about harnessing this and working with the industry to ensure that this isn't just a new qualification, but a catalyst for change.



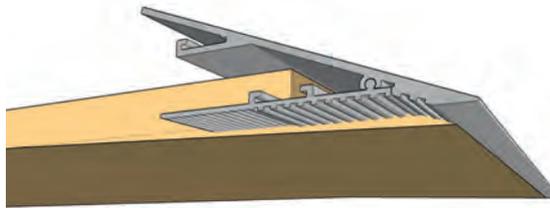
QIC TRIMS are the UK's leading supplier of aluminium trims and associated products for the interior fit out sector, offering products for use within dry lining, suspended ceilings and glass partitioning systems.



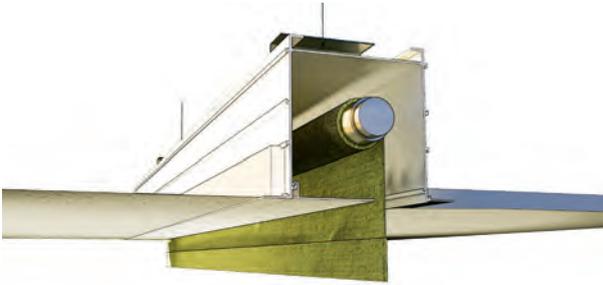
CEILING RAFT SOLUTIONS



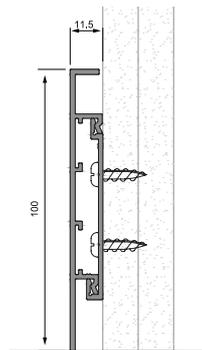
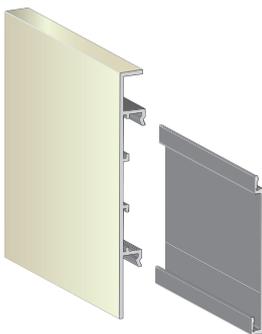
PERIMETER SOLUTIONS



BLIND BOX SOLUTIONS

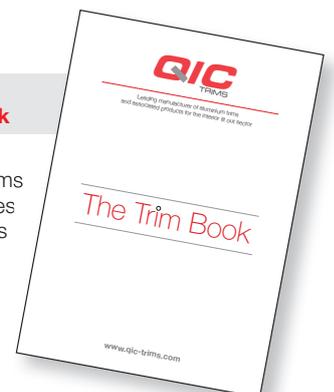


SKIRTING SOLUTIONS



Coming Soon
The Trim Book

Containing our full range of Trims Including profiles and dimensions



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Brighter outlook for homelessness charity

Selectaglaze and Pilkington, in liaison with CRASH, the construction industry charity which assists homelessness charities and hospices with construction projects, have provided secondary glazing for a new computer suite at London homelessness charity Caritas Anchor House.

Existing office space is being converted into the new computer suite, which will provide users with research opportunities.

To comply with Health and Safety regulations, the area needed to have fire insulated walls. Three fire resistant internal windows were fitted, creating internal vision panels to make a bright and airy area where people could see in and out, with acoustic insulation to help concentration and provide fire resistance.

Selectaglaze donated secondary glazing and Pilkington donated the Pyrodur fire resistant glass to support the secondary glazing installation.

Selectaglaze installed three Series 40 units with 10mm Pyrodur fire rated glass.

The Series 40 is a beaded fixed frame system offering 30-minute fire integrity protection. The secondary glazing units were framed in fire rated timber grounds and transom mullions. An additional benefit was the enhancement to acoustic insulation.

Amanda Duberry, chief executive of Caritas Anchor House, said: "The glazing supplied has been such an important donation for us. It's enabled us to open up the room which we will soon be using as an IT and e-learning suite for our residents. The people we house and support have come to us following a period of homelessness and they may be traumatised by the experiences they have been through. We wanted to make this new space as open and light as possible to create a feeling of space and safety, and to enable our staff to see what is happening in the room without having to be in the space directly. We are extremely grateful to Selectaglaze and Pilkington for their donations, and to CRASH for connecting us."

www.selectaglaze.co.uk

FIRAS accreditation for Lindner

Lindner Interiors has achieved FIRAS certification for the design, supply and installation of fire-rated glazing and steel doors.

The FIRAS certification is a third-party scheme for installers that has been instrumental in improving the installation and maintenance standards of both passive and active fire protection products and systems. Lindner Interiors applied for certification and underwent a three-stage assessment process on office management systems, workmanship on site for all trade disciplines for which certification is sought and a competence of supervisory and installation employees.

Pete Benjamin, projects director at Lindner Interiors, said: "FIRAS accreditation means the business now has an established mark of endorsement in installing passive fire protection systems – which is crucial when fire safety has been in the spotlight over the past few years.

"We have passed office and site audits and our key technicians and supervisors have passed both practical and theoretical tests. This demonstrates that our design, supply and install of fire-rated glazing and steel doors will reach safety standards easily due to the competency of our workers."

www.lindner-group.com



Ultra-green ceiling solution for landmark office building

Ultra-green ceiling tiles from Armstrong Ceiling Solutions feature on the fifth and latest office building in Cardiff's Capital Quarter redevelopment.

Specified by M2M Architects, they feature throughout the office areas at No 4 Capital Quarter, the eight-storey canal-side landmark office building.

The Dune eVo MicroLook mineral tiles had already been used by main contractor JR Smart on the five previous office projects. This latest, 96,870ft² Grade A building is now home to Sky UK, legal firm Geldards and financial services company Optimum Credit. The building incorporates the occupational density of open floor plates to suit the current and future needs of modern office occupiers as well as a central atrium, high-quality reception, sixth-floor roof terrace and ground-floor retail and leisure units.

Around 11,000m² of the 1200mm x 300mm Dune eVo panels were supplied to No 4 by the Cardiff branch of distributor Nevill Long and installed on the 2.7m floor-to-ceiling heights by specialist subcontractor 2nd Generation Facades.

www.armstrongceilings.com

Historic building gets £10m revamp

A refurbishment of 110,000ft² of office space at historic Cardiff building Hodge House is being carried out by Paramount Interiors and is due to be completed by the end of the year.

The office building, which was built in 1915, is being revamped in an investment from its owner Legal & General.

The building's features, including a period staircase from St Mary Street and a vaulted ballroom on the fifth floor, are being restored and enhanced. Six floors of large open-plan modern offices are also being created, together with a striking atrium and dedicated flexible space for start-up and tech firms.

www.paramountinteriors.com



£18.5 million restoration project

ISG has secured an £18.5 million project with The Vale of Glamorgan Council to redevelop and extend the popular Welsh Medium school - Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg in the town of Barry.

Procured via the influential SEWSCAP capital works framework, this scheme forms part of the Welsh government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, designed to transform and upgrade the country's education estate.

The extensive plans to modernise and upgrade facilities at the school will see ISG construct five new extensions including a design and technology teaching block, a new sports hall built to Sport England specification and a reception area and dining hall, creating additional capacity for up to 299 new students.

Externally, the contractor will deliver significant enhancements to existing provision, forming six new multi-use games areas and a floodlit 3G all-weather rugby sports pitch, which will be available for community use out of school hours. This is in addition to a new coach park enabling easier access from Port Road.

The linked new build elements will extend capacity and create modern teaching spaces and ISG will conduct an extensive phased refurbishment programme across the existing school campus. Tailoring the construction programme to minimise impact to day-to-day operations.

Zoe Price, group director for public sector frameworks at ISG, said: "Partnerships and collaboration are vital to the work we carry out in the public sector and we are constantly innovating to make projects more efficient and to reduce wasteful practices. Important capital frameworks like SEWSCAP provide the space and early involvement that enables contractors to problem solve creatively and develop innovative solutions that prove transformative to programmes, budgets and social value outcomes for our local communities."

www.isgplc.com

FIS makes its mark with launch, awards and more at UK Construction Week

FIS launched its landmark Acoustic Verification Scheme, rewarded the winners of the #iBuiltThis2019 competition, presented CPD seminars and delivered workshops on mental health issues during UK Construction Week (UKCW).

As World Mental Health Day coincided with UKCW on 10 October, FIS joined Red Umbrella to bring an interactive workshop on workplace stress and the impact on mental health. A demonstration of a counselling therapy session followed.

The free workshop looked at the differences between stress and pressure and where the line between the two exists, work-related stress and causes, how to identify stress and its symptoms, how to identify employees suffering from stress, steps to take to engage with them, professional support and how to prevent stress occurring in the first place.

There was also a demonstration of a therapy session with a member of the construction industry.

The #iBuiltThis2019 awards ceremony formed part of the UKCW's inaugural Construction Awards, hosted by celebrity architect George Clarke. The competition, now in its third year, drew on the pride construction workers take when they see finished projects they have worked on and use this to promote construction as a career choice for young people.

The FIS Acoustic Verification Scheme for operable walls and partitions was launched in the surfaces and materials area. Further details of this scheme can be read in our technical feature on page 18.

FIS technical director Joe Cilia delivered two CPD seminars, the first on designing and installing service penetrations in compartment walls and floors and the second on acoustics and wellbeing.

For the second year, UK Construction Week ran the UKCW Role Models initiative, supported by FIS. More details of this will feature in the next edition of SpecFinish.

ON-SITE WORKS ON £65M COMMERCIAL SCHEME

Mansell Finishes has been appointed by Galliford Try to undertake on-site works at the Project Apple scheme at Arena Central in Birmingham, a key commercial development for the city.

Designed by Make Architects, the 14 floors of office space, communal areas and three basement levels will deliver 230,000ft² of commercial space for end client HM Revenue and Customs and is expected to be ready for fit-out in spring 2020.

Worth almost £3m to the company, Mansell Finishes commenced works in June and will finish on site in February 2020. Once completed, the company will have completed 10,000m² of drylining, 22,500m² of MF ceilings and 24,000m² of skimming. The works also include the installation of shaftwell, linings and metal pan ceilings.

The external curtain walling of the building will feature a pattern of hexagonal metallic panels.

During the tender negotiation period, Mansell Finishes identified potential buildability issues between the interfaces of the plasterboard blind box details, the MF margins and external wall linings. As an alternative, preformed blind boxes were investigated as a solution and Galliford Try

took up this option following ratification with the development design team. Mansell Finishes has also been instrumental in the development of the design of the independent wall linings surrounding the hexagonal windows.

Mike Foy, commercial director at Mansell Finishes, said: "This is the third commercial building at Birmingham's Arena Central development and once completed will make a striking addition to the landscape."

www.mansellfinishes.co.uk



FIS SCOTTISH AWARDS 2019

Showcasing the quality of work and range of projects carried out in Scotland over the past year, the FIS Scottish Awards were held on 19 September at the InterContinental Edinburgh The George.

Scottish comedian Eric Davidson, who hails from near Edinburgh and has had sell-out shows at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe for several years, presented to the winners and entertained those who attended with his amusing 'Brexit' song and a string of anecdotes.

Award entries had been judged by industry stalwart Phil Taylor, who received the FIS President's Award for lifetime achievement last year, and retired industry professional David Matthews.

The award categories were:

- Interior Fit-Out
- Partial Fit-Out
- Suspended Ceilings
- Drywall Construction
- Plasterwork
- Partitioning
- Judges Award
- Apprentice of the Year

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Connor Hogg Carter Ceilings

Carter Ceilings first met Connor Hogg when he had been directly employed by a client as a labourer on one of its sites. The 22-year-old asked the site supervisor if Carter would be hiring apprentices. Despite the prospect of considerably lower pay as an apprentice, Connor was happy to make the short-term sacrifice to build a better future for himself.

"This attitude is testament to his commitment to personal development and progression," said Alison Warrender, business manager at Carter Ceilings. "Connor always makes sure he is carrying out tasks correctly and does not shy away from asking tradesmen and college lecturers if he is doing it correctly."

Connor has travelled long distances to work, even leaving home at 4am to travel five hours to Skye. He has been described by the Carter team as "the most committed, reliable, conscientious and trustworthy apprentice we have had".

In its award nomination, Carter applauded his involvement in site operations. When he started working at the firm, he was on site with a team that wasn't entirely comfortable with IT, but Connor was always on hand to help his supervisor complete registers and photograph them to send back to the office for Carter's records.

The judges said: "He has used his existing skills to train his supervisor, demonstrating a two-way commitment to learning and adding value to his employer where he can. He has stepped forward to volunteer for less attractive jobs, making sure he grabs every opportunity to gain experience while also adding value."



INTERIOR FIT-OUT SPONSORED BY CCF

GOLD

**Scotwood Interiors
Trip.com, Edinburgh**

Scotwood was brought in to create a contemporary workplace for online travel agency Trip.Com in the heart of Edinburgh. It created large open-plan areas, breakout spaces and themed meeting rooms, using a mixture of glazed solid walls and bespoke panelling.

The works also included flooring throughout, using tiled, vinyl and carpet tiles, and decoration involved a combination of paint and feature wallpaper.

In addition, Scotwood adapted existing mechanical installation and installed new air conditioning in the communications room, along with full electrical fittings.

The judges were in little doubt: "Scotwood created an excellent, innovative and vibrant environment, featuring myriad finishes, including striking colourful wallpapers, brick slips, metal mesh ceilings and glass partitions – all of which perfectly blend together to form a lively interior."

SILVER

**Axis Interiors Solutions
Avison Young, Sutherland House, Glasgow**

Axis Interiors Solutions was awarded the Cat B office fit-out for the new Glasgow office of property company Avison Young. The contract comprised the formation of a new reception area involving bespoke joinery works, group working areas and breakout spaces, which would reflect a collaborative environment for Avison Young's clients.

A high standard of specification included: feature floor coverings in specific areas in a herringbone pattern; boardroom, meeting rooms and focus rooms using the Komfort Polar double-glazed system with double-glazed Sonik doors and banded glazing; and feature lighting, acoustic panels and acoustic hanging screens.

The judges agreed this was "a contract worthy of the award". "The aim was to create a forward-thinking environment that Avison Young could show its clients; with the partitions, floors, storage walls, furniture, carpets and decoration, Axis Solutions certainly achieved what the client wanted."



Ian Hughes, CITB (left) with
Connor Hogg, Carter Ceilings.





SUSPENDED CEILING
SPONSORED BY NEVILL LONG
GOLD

Brian Hendry Interiors
Balloch Primary School Campus, Alexandria

Brian Hendry Interiors worked with Morgan Sindall as the specialist ceilings subcontractor responsible for installing a range of acoustic ceiling solutions at the new Balloch shared campus.

The £16m school, designed by Holmes Miller Architects, opened in 2018 on the site of St Kessog's Primary School, bringing together pupils from three schools under one roof in a modern learning environment.

Brian Hendry Interiors supplied and installed the suspended ceilings works package, which comprised around 3,500m² of ceilings and included plasterboard bulkhead features. Completed within 23 weeks, the suspended ceilings package incorporated three acoustic Armstrong Ceiling solutions – 600 x 600 Perla OP 0.95 regular tiles within a 24mm exposed grid; 600 x 600 Parafon Hygien board within a 24mm NRC grid; and the Techzone integrated ceiling system incorporating Perla Op 0.95 1,200 x 300mm Microlook planks.

The judges were impressed: "The Techzone ceiling requires a higher level of installer involvement to ensure the ceiling design and detailing achieve the architect's vision. Overall, this project is completed to an extremely high standard in terms of both finish and client satisfaction."

SILVER
Linear Projects
The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA)

Specialist interiors subcontractor Linear Projects oversaw the design and installation of ceilings and walls at this £333m state-of-the-art events venue in Aberdeen. Working in collaboration with Rockfon, it ensured the systems met rigorous acoustic and structural demands.

The initial brief was for an elegant high-performance ceiling grid that could span 2,500m² and support the ceiling infill, and to find an acoustic ceiling and wall solution to suit the exhibition spaces and main arena, where the ceiling reaches 27m.

Rockfon created 100mm thick Color-all black ceiling tiles with 100mm Rockwool FLEXI overlay for the ceilings, and 40mm thick Color-all panels with 100mm or 160mm FLEXI for the walls. This allowed Linear Projects to deliver an acoustic solution that would control the sound reverberation of the large performance space.

The judges hailed "a very impressive project carried out to an extremely high standard". "Stringent acoustic requirements were addressed by collaboration between Linear Projects and Rockfon. Although it looks like a simple lay-in grid ceiling, a lot of behind-the-scenes design work has taken place."



PARTITIONING
SPONSORED BY
KOMFORT PARTITIONING
GOLD

Indeglas
The Bayes Centre, Edinburgh



Indeglas was tasked with creating a detailed design specification to provide glazed partitions installed over five floors in Edinburgh University's Bayes Centre, its innovation hub for data science and artificial intelligence.

The centre, the final phase of the university's Potterrow development, opened in October 2018, transforming Edinburgh into one of the UK's most dynamic tech centres.

From an outline specification for the internal glazed screen work package, Indeglas worked with architect Bennetts Associates to create detailed design specifications, drawings and engineering calculations for each screen type required.

Sixty-minute fire-rated 53dB acoustic barrier screens, including deflection heads, were installed to the fifth floor using robotic lifting equipment to manoeuvre the glass panes into the building and into their installed framework.

The judges said: "An impressive looking project with fine detailing, specifically the in-house-designed glazed screen to drylining junction. The overall project has a very high-tech, modern feeling, and Indeglas' glazed partitions blended in perfectly."

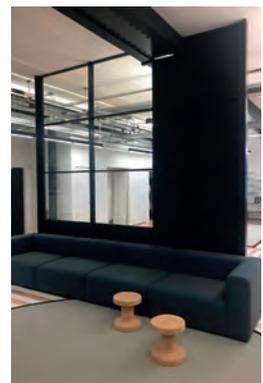
SILVER
Planet Contracting
AutoRek, Glasgow

Planet Contracting was commissioned to install its industrial style Loft 54 system into the new head office of financial controls and data management solutions provider AutoRek in Glasgow.

The Garment Factory, comprising 780m² of space, is a category B listed building located in the Merchant City conservation area of Glasgow. A £6m refurbishment project by developer Castleforge has involved restoring original features and introducing contemporary finishes.

Planet installed partitions up to 3,600mm high, consisting of a mixture of glass, laminate boards and mesh panels. Because there were no suspended ceilings, the heads of the partitions had to be fixed to the structural soffit and cut around the existing beams.

The judges admired an "impressive looking project, maintaining the industrial look of the old garment factory": "This level of detail proved challenging, but provided an excellent looking end product," they noted. "The overall project has a modern but industrial feel that provides an excellent working space."





DRYWALL CONSTRUCTION
SPONSORED BY QIC TRIMS
GOLD

Brian Hendry Interiors
The Edinburgh Grand

Brian Hendry Interiors delivered the drylining package at The Edinburgh Grand, which comprises 50 luxury apartments, restaurant and bar in a grade A listed building. The former Royal Bank of Scotland headquarters, built in the 1930s, was originally five storeys but now has a rooftop apartment.

The 49-week project included metal stud partitioning, shaftwall partitioning and wall linings with high acoustic/fire requirements across the apartments, meeting rooms, bar, restaurant and back of house over 10 floors.

The partitions installed varied according to the area. The apartments were separated by twin wall 50mm metal stud partitions, double-sheeted with 15mm Knauf Soundshield Plus plasterboard to achieve 64dB. The rooms in each apartment were constructed using 70mm metal stud partitions with 15mm Knauf Soundshield Plus plasterboard, achieving 42dB.

In addition, 120-minute fire partitions were installed in various locations, using 70mm metal stud with 15mm Knauf Fire Panel plasterboard, with shaftwall partitions constructed to service risers. Double-layer fire plasterboard ceilings were installed beneath the sixth-floor penthouse.

On the top floor, the partitions installed followed the curve of a feature atrium to facilitate the formation of additional accommodation.

The judges were impressed: "From one-bedroom apartments to a rooftop penthouse, all were afforded the same level of finish, with the champagne and cocktail bar fitted out in an art deco fashion to perfectly complement this listed building. Overall, a fantastic looking building with an opulent feel throughout."

SILVER
Veitch Interiors
University of the West of Scotland

For this project, to create new teaching facilities at the University of the West of Scotland, Veitch undertook the demountable and fire-rated glazed partitioning packages.

The building is a conversion of three pavilions into three teaching wings over three floors, with a newly created Street link area.

One of the biggest challenges was the restricted loading area caused by works to create the Street on the main frontage. The glass partitioning was at the final stage of the build, so access was limited and glass screens for the atrium areas on each floor and wing had to be manually handled into place.

Some 1,000m² of Ocula FT105 double-glazed partitions were installed, along with 400m² of Ocula fire screens with 60-minute integrity and 60-minute insulation. Maple veneered and laminate doors completed the package.

The judges applauded the "extremely impressive modern university building". "All lines were sharp and detailing good and maintained throughout the project. The area is a pleasure to enter with its reception and well appointed cafe."



PARTIAL FIT-OUT
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GOLD

North Group
Ballater Royal Waiting Room, Aberdeenshire

North Group was appointed by Aberdeenshire Council to carry out restoration and manufacturing works at Ballater Station, which was originally built in 1866 so that Queen Victoria and the royal family could travel by train to Balmoral but was mostly destroyed by fire in 2015.

As part of the initial site visit, North Group photographed what remained of the structural fabric of the building, before recording and numbering everything that was being taken out of the remains of the Royal Waiting Room.

As items were removed, they were carefully wrapped and stored, either for referencing for remanufacture or to be salvaged and repaired. The firm then set about manufacturing wall panelling damaged in the fire to match what would have originally been on the walls, as well as the fireplace and doors. The project also involved reinstating a damaged Victorian toilet.

A number of panels that had been removed from site when the station was being used as offices were donated to help with the restoration.

The judges agreed: "The end result is an impressive restoration project showing off excellent finishing skills."

SILVER
Veitch Interiors
Hendricks Gin Palace, Ayrshire

Veitch Interiors carried out a range of works to create a distillery/visitors centre at Hendricks Gin Palace on the outskirts of Girvan. The project included suspended ceiling installation, soft floor coverings, drylining, drywall partitions, integrated plumbing system/cubicles, bespoke furniture, glazed screens and joinery.

There were challenges in terms of site location, design and working with other contractors, which called for continual collaboration. A mix of finishes was used, modern and retro. The toilet areas were fitted out with bespoke IPS panelling, cubicles, mirrors and benching, and ceiling details involved MF/SAS international metal ceiling tiles.

Drywall partitions incorporated style trims to create shadow gaps at abutments, doorframes, skirting, wall and ceiling junctions. Veitch also manufactured and installed bespoke furniture in the bar/lounge, master distiller's lab, still houses and control room. It also manufactured external arch doorsets, incorporating a viewing door.

The judges applauded "a great looking building fitted out with an industrial modern feel". "A lot of details have been incorporated, including shadow gaps to the majority of the drylining, and in the entrance areas, Armourcoat polished plaster gives a really nice sharp finish. It's a pity this building isn't open to the general public."





JUDGES AWARD
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North Group
Gordon Highlanders Museum, Aberdeen

North Group was appointed as the main contractor on this cultural heritage project within Aberdeen. Collaborating with the Gordon Highlanders Museum, the works involved the formation of a replica trench system from the First World War as part of the visitor experience.

North Group built timber frame sections in its joinery workshop, which were then transported to site and partially panelled with sawn-off cuts of logs to form sections of the walls within the trench. This was complemented by corrugated metal sheeting along the bottom of the walls to replicate the look and feel of a First World War trench.

In addition, the firm supplied more than 500 sandbags, which were placed around the top. Within the trench walls, it built sleeping platforms, a firing platform, toilets and an observation post. Two shipping containers were also fitted out with timber panelling to create officers quarters and a regimental aid post.

North Group oversaw the installation of all electrics in the trench, which included brass light fittings, leaving the judges in no doubt: "A fantastic heritage project fully deserving of the gold award."

SILVER
Veitchi Interiors
Queens Manor Care Home, Edinburgh

Veitchi was employed to design and build a two-storey 60-bedroom care home using a Metframe system. All the Metsec products were delivered direct to Veitchi's factory, where they were assembled into panels to be delivered straight to site for direct installation.

The challenge was to erect the two-storey light-gauge steel frame on a tight site on one of Edinburgh's main arterial roads. Restrictions on delivery times and limited space on site called for carefully sequenced deliveries, and to complicate matters, two cranes were required for frame erection.

The structure is hemmed in on three sides by housing and on the fourth by the main road, so to make full use of the site, Veitchi used a bespoke edge protection system developed for use with the Metframe system. This eliminated the need for external scaffold and allowed the structure to be taken closer to the site boundary.

The judges said: "The close-knit integration between the Metsec design team, the Veitchi design team and the installation guys on site was paramount in seeing this project through to a successful conclusion. The completed building looks fantastic, both inside and out."



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PLASTERWORK (GENERAL AND HERITAGE)
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GOLD
David Fisher & Sons
City Observatory redevelopment, Edinburgh

Refurbishment work on the neoclassical City Observatory in Edinburgh first began back in 2012. The building, originally designed by William Henry Playfair in 1818, had fallen into dereliction over the past century, until visual arts group Collective decided to transform it into its new gallery.

David Fisher's works on the project were completed in September 2018 over a four-week period. Initially, the scope of works covered traditional lath and lime plaster to the ceilings and meridian slots of the observatory, and in-situ work to the cornices. The firm's challenge was also to retain as much of the existing fabric as possible.

The scope was later extended to include a proprietary lime-based plaster on stainless steel rib lath to the walls of the City Dome.

The judges praised the efforts of the team comprising four men and an apprentice. "The refurbishment of the city observatory was completed using traditional construction methods of lath and lime plaster to the ceilings and meridian slots, and in-situ refurbishment works to the cornice's, whilst endeavouring to retain as much of the existing fabric as possible."



FIS president Andrew Smith addresses those attending the Scottish awards.



THE PI DILEMMA



A number of factors have impacted on the supply of professional indemnity (PI) insurance, making many question how essential it is. **Stephanie Cornwall** spoke to some of the experts to gain a clearer perspective on why and when it is needed.

Opinions differ and we've all heard plenty of arguments for and against whether PI is something that a contractor should buy. Recent reports of price hikes and reduced supply capacity to the construction sector have made some contractors question the need to have it in place.

So what exactly is PI insurance and who actually needs it? The long and short of it is that a claim can always be made so, in contracting, a PI policy can provide peace of mind and a safety net for the contractor should the worst happen. Few have sufficient resources to meet major claims against them in accused negligence cases and PI insurance exists to mitigate this risk, providing cover for the contractor who has assumed design responsibility.

Helen Tapper, finance director at Tapper Interiors, and incoming FIS president, has worked within the contracting sector for 18 years. She said PI insurance is a relatively new concept for many contractors and stressed that 'design' is the key word for those unsure about whether to purchase.

"If a fit-out contractor is working for an end-user, it should be discussed as to where the design responsibility lies," she said. "Historically most fit-out contractors did not carry PI insurance but it is becoming more common to do so because the insurance market is pushing it. Think carefully about the type and scope of works that you undertake and discuss it carefully with your broker before purchasing."

Often clients will insist on PI being implemented. For many contractors, there will be a minimum contractual requirement for PI

"Historically most fit-out contractors did not carry PI insurance but it is becoming more common to do so ... Think carefully about the type and scope of works that you undertake."



"We have also noticed recently that for those contractors who are involved in design and build, there seems to be pressure on them increasing limits of indemnity. Again I warn clients this cannot be provided just for the one contract. It would need to be for their whole turnover and maintained for a period of years."

Effects on prices and provision

Prices in the design and construct PI market have risen in the past 18 months, primarily because underwriter Lloyds of London reported PI as being the second worst performing class of business and reported losses last year of £435m.

"In view of this, Lloyds revoked a number of licences to underwrite PI and syndicates were advised to only underwrite business at a profit," Simon Henderson said. "Other UK general insurers previously active in design and construct PI have taken a similar line and the strategy is now to underwrite smaller lines/limits and apply sometimes substantial premium increases.

"As capacity has reduced in the PI market, prices have risen because A) there is less competition and B) underwriting for a profit is the key strategy. Insurers are filling their capacity with renewals and appetite for new business has reduced. Effectively what we are seeing is insurers limiting their risk and exposure whilst charging what they perceive as rates that will return a profit rather than a loss. At the time of writing there isn't an influx of other capacity for those insurers that are exiting or hardening their position."

Robert Morris of Jelf said many insurers left in the market are looking for significant rate increases "in an attempt to rectify their book before their lords and masters tell them to call it a day".

"Coupled with these increases is reduced capacity on risks and policy wordings that are not as extensive. A good example of this is in the design and construct market where 'civil liability' cover is being reigned back to a negligence only basis of cover by some insurers," he said. Robert said the role of a specialist PI broker in the construction market is now vital as they have the knowledge to be able to work with clients and with insurers to address the issues at hand and achieve the best solution.

The Grenfell legacy

The Grenfell Tower incident has contributed to the overall effect and one of the key issues that underwriters now routinely ask about in far greater detail is the type of linings that contractors are installing. Some underwriters have stopped writing design and construct PI altogether since Grenfell.

But if a contractor can demonstrate good risk management policies, including training, >>

Helen Tapper



Paul Copas



Simon Henderson



Robert Morris



insurance to be in place for the duration of a contract and beyond.

Simon Henderson, managing director of Darwin Clayton, confirmed pressure from clients had driven more contractors to approach his company about PI insurance. He said: "We are seeing an increased demand for PI cover due to contractual requirements being imposed on contractors regardless of business activity or risk."

Director of Trident Insurance Brokers, Paul Copas, said this can lead to confusion for some contractors, who aren't clear about what they are taking on.

"We often have clients contact us requesting PI insurance for individual contracts where they have not had previous PI cover and presumably not been involved in design and build contracts before," he said. "This is not usually available and I often warn clients that becoming involved in such contracts is a long-term commitment in view of the common contractual requirement to maintain the cover for 12 years. We will only be able to provide a quote for the one year.

accreditations, method statements and an overall embracement of professionalism, these will all be attractive features to underwriters, Simon said.

"This is especially so when the insurance market 'hardens' as we are currently seeing in PI," he said. "If members are finding difficulties with placing their PI risk, they should talk to a broker that specialises in the design and construct sector or a broker with a Lloyds licence as whilst capacity in the London markets has hardened, this is where the class is still underwritten more readily."

Helen firmly believes many contractors working for Tier 1 contractors can avoid the need for PI altogether if they make it clear from the outset that design responsibility does not rest with them.

"We have always advised our members not to take design responsibility on contracts when working for Tier 1 contractors, and to make sure that this issue is discussed at the pre-contract stage," she said. "If design

responsibility is mentioned at all in the contract, have it crossed out and approved and minuted by the Tier 1 contractor."

If a fit-out contractor is working for an end-user, then once again it should be discussed as to where the design responsibility lies, she advised.

FIS has produced a factsheet for members which outlines some of the common questions contractors might have about professional indemnity insurance.

"If members are finding difficulties with placing their PI risk, they should talk to a broker that specialises in the design and construct sector."



FIND OUT MORE

For impartial advice on indemnity insurance, you can find more information at www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-indemnity-insurance. For advice on policies and your company's individual needs, speak to one of any of the following FIS members: Darwin Clayton, EC Insurance, or Trident Insurance Brokers Ltd.

What is PI insurance?

PI insurance, also known as errors and omission insurance (E&O) provides indemnity for the designer's legal liability for damages from the results of a claim towards the designer's breach of professional duty. In essence, PI insurance protects the designer from claims against harmful or potentially harmful mistakes / accidental negligence in the design process.

Who needs PI insurance?

PI insurance is designed to cover anyone that has any design responsibility, including but not limited to:

- Main contractors and subcontractors working on design and build projects i.e. contractors who have been given design responsibility for the project
- Principle designers
- Developers

A designer is an organisation or individual that prepares or modifies a design for any part of a construction project, including the design of temporary works, or who arranges or instructs someone else to do it.

Construction contracts will usually require those with design responsibilities to purchase and provide evidence of PI insurance to protect themselves against any claims they may have in the future.

Contractors requesting PI Insurance for individual contracts where they have not had previous PI cover and not been involved in design and build contracts before is not usually available, they should be aware this is a long-term commitment in view of the common requirement to maintain the cover for 12 years.

It is important to advise your insurer at the earliest possible moment of a potential claim as this gives the insurer a chance to advise the insured and to mitigate the risk and to meet claims notification conditions within the policy.

What does PI insurance cover?

The policy covers the cost of defending claims of negligence made against it, subject to the insured party paying the initial excess set out in the policy. Policies can be extended to provide cover for employee theft (fiduciary cover). PI insurance is usually expected to be maintained through the whole period of design liability. This is normally either six or 12 years. Cover can be fully retroactive for neglect error or omission of professional duty in respect of past services.

It may include claimants' costs and expenses, defence costs, investigation costs, and some policies may extend to include mitigation costs, however a retroactive restriction date may be placed on the policy.

This date is normally the earliest date from which professional indemnity cover has been held continuously. Increasing limits of indemnity. It's important to remember that this cannot be provided just for the one contract, it would need to be for their whole turnover and maintained for a period of years.

PI insurance limitations

PI insurance will not cover defective workmanship or unfit contractor supervision unless expressly included within the insurance policy. Usually PI insurance policies expressly exclude faulty workmanship.

PI policies will often exclude cover of losses arising from onerous contract terms to the extent the associated liability exceeds what would otherwise have been the parties' liabilities by law. The insurer will not cover these projects as the designer has taken on increased risk owing to the increased difficulty of meeting the contract's obligations.

Designers under the contract term "fit for purpose" may have problems recovering liability claims under its PI policy, even if the designer acted negligently. Some PI policies expressly exclude all cover on a project where fitness for purpose is imposed. This is due to the increased risk on meeting the obligation that the design will meet its intended use immediately on completion of the project.



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SOUND ADVICE ON ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCE DATA

New verification scheme launch will allay industry concerns and provide benchmark for the future.

With the acoustic performance of products so important and in a bid to curb growing incidents of 'passing off', a new Acoustic Verification Scheme has been created by FIS in response to confusion and concerns related to the comparability of acoustic airborne sound insulation tests claims. This will allow designers, architects and contractors to specify products, safe in the knowledge they will provide the acoustics performance claimed, eliminating any misinformation and misleading information.

It is a subject that is rising to the top of the design agenda, but there is now a far greater understanding of the impact of good acoustics on a commercial space. Therefore, when sound is overlooked, this can be to the detriment of an employee's wellbeing and their ability to concentrate work creatively, collaboratively and

productively or communicate. It can be the key to the success of a building and is why it has become so important to understand a product's acoustic performance and the manufacturer's data being offered.

Operable walls

For FIS, the journey to the acoustic verification process began with operable walls. It found users were complaining these walls were not performing in the way that was expected. This is partly due to the installation process and partly due to it being the only partition that is dismantled and re-erected on a regular basis by non-trained staff. If the acoustic seals are not exactly right, acoustical integrity can be comprised by leakage and flanking sound coming through. FIS also found evidence of

'There is a growing understanding of the intrinsic link between good acoustic management and wellbeing for occupants.'

falsification, and in some cases tests revealed that manufacturers were treating an operable wall like a normal fixed partition, and physically sealing every joint. It actually needed to be tested like a door and operated five times before the test commenced to demonstrate it was completely operable. This makes a huge difference, enough to put some manufacturers in front of their competitors.

As part of the FIS acoustic verification scheme, which provides a method in which independent acoustic consultant Cundall verifies acoustic test data, FIS was then able to verify all of the test evidence that was being put forward and highlighted companies who had not tested operable walls as they should have done. In other words, it highlighted those who were testing an operable wall as a fixed partition. During that process, some companies withdrew from the scheme.

Andrew Parkin, partner, global head of acoustics at Cundall, said: "When it comes to the selection and specification of demountable partitions, knowing that manufacturer's data is accurate is essential. The FIS Verification Scheme seeks to review claimed performance, for both tests and assessments, against agreed Terms of Reference. Those systems found to be in accordance with these TOR will then give designers confidence that in-situ performance can be readily predicted."

For contractors such as Willmott Dixon, the verification scheme meant they could specify manufacturers in confidence that it was a level playing field. They had been tested in the same way and had comparable figures. As a result, the contractor is only using operable walls that have met the requirements of the scheme.

Supply chain manager (products) at Willmott Dixon, Kevin Dundas, said: "There is a growing

understanding of the intrinsic link between good acoustic management and wellbeing for occupants and this scheme helps to deliver what our clients expect from us and our industry."

Partitioning systems

In the case of partitioning systems, verifying data testing verification was driven by FIS members who were not confident that everyone in the market was working to a level playing field. Whilst fixed partitions are different to operable walls as you can seal all the joints, FIS agreed a set of parameters that would constitute a test that could be used for comparison reasons. This would then provide specifiers and architects with assurance that if they choose a product from this list that all products will be tested in the same way and all data has been verified. It's essentially a verification process. FIS is simply taking the data companies are providing in test reports and verifying it meets the criteria required to meet the scheme.

FIS CEO Iain McIlwee said: "The misleading use of data has become an industry concern, as it means clients end up paying for acoustic performance that is not achieved and undermines the credibility of our sector. The scheme has been created to ensure that those seeking to exemplify best practice are recognised and rewarded for this and prevent inaccurate or misleading information from undermining the market and responsible manufacturers.

"The test verification framework we have created will provide consistency and enable the comparison of products and systems on a 'like-for-like' basis. Manufacturers and suppliers of partitioning systems are opening up their data for scrutiny. This is the first time anything like this has been done."

Kevin Dundas



Andrew Parkin



Iain McIlwee



Tips for specifiers

1. Understand the needs of the space. Is it going to be a space for collaboration and communication, or a space for concentration or even creativity?
2. Be aware that sound, like water, will find the weakest point through. Therefore voids in ceilings and ducts need to be addressed.
3. Understand that sound travels through any medium, not just air. Structure-borne sound needs to be addressed separately to airborne sound.
4. Good sound attenuation relies on density and airtightness.
5. Consider allowing background sound into meeting rooms to provide masking and privacy for room-to-room attenuation.
6. Sound absorption needs to be considered alongside sound insulation.
7. Employ a competent professional acoustician.



FIND OUT MORE

For manufacturers wanting to find out about getting data verified, email info@thefis.org and request a copy of the FIS Acoustic Verification Scheme Manual.

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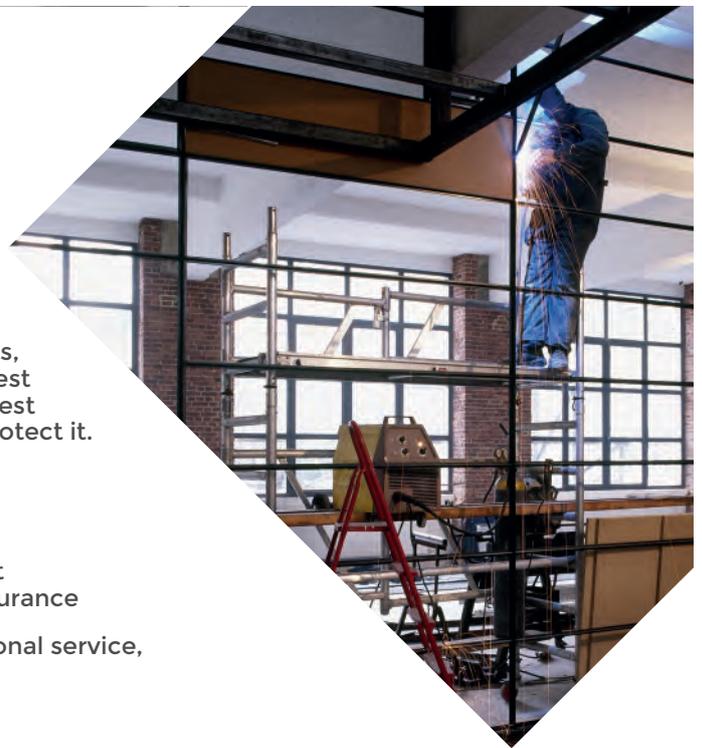
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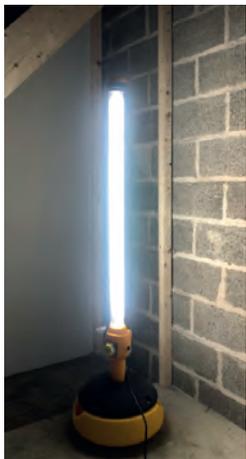
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THE FORGOTTEN DUTY-HOLDER



Kizzy Augustin highlights why competence is key to effective workforce management.

As we all probably know, contractors – including employers, employees, installers, designers, manufacturers and any construction site worker – have responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) to look after the health and safety of employees and non employees and to ensure that they are taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others that are affected by their acts or omissions at work.

Individuals also have the responsibility to cooperate with their employers to ensure compliance with their employer’s overarching health and safety duties. However, I have always been worried about the possibility of the ‘forgotten dutyholder’ for the purposes of health and safety legal compliance coming to the forefront again and my fears were proved right after a recent case of mine was brought to court.

The forgotten dutyholder is, in my mind, those that have responsibilities during a construction project but tend not to be prosecuted often for criminal offences under health and safety legislation. Let’s look at section 6 HSWA:

- There is a duty on any person that designs, manufactures, imports or supplies an article or substance for use at work to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the article or substance is “so designed and constructed that it will be safe and without risks to health at all times when it is being set, used, cleaned or maintained by a person at work”.
- The dutyholder also has to ensure that appropriate testing and examination of the product has been carried out to ensure that the product that they are providing is safe and without risks to health.

These are relatively onerous responsibilities, yet there have been very few prosecutions for this particular type of breach. There is a similar consideration for ‘forgotten’ or alternative dutyholders under Article 5(3) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which considers liability for every person who has control of a premises for matters to the extent of their control of those matters – by virtue of a contract or tenancy agreement. »

“It was argued that professionals responsible for installing products could also be liable for a defective product by virtue of their installation under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005.”

I'm concerned enough that, in a post Grenfell world, many other dutyholders (including installers of products) will be caught out for failing to meet their obligations under safety legislation – specifically the HSWA and the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) – and prosecuted for their trouble.

My fears were made a reality when a few months ago, a client of mine was prosecuted by Lincoln County Council, where it was argued that professionals responsible for installing products could also be liable for a defective product by virtue of their installation under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005.

This seemed strange, as this particular piece of legislation was usually reserved for manufacturers or suppliers in a consumer law context. Here, a fireplace installer was being prosecuted for safety failings because he is deemed to be a 'producer' of products. This has serious implications for all tradespeople and installers, who can now be prosecuted under the GPSR, even if the product itself was perfectly sound.

The facts

My client was a fireplace installer who was being prosecuted as a 'producer' under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 (GPSR) for supplying an unsafe product by virtue of its installation. Under section 2 of the GPSR, a 'producer' includes:

- The manufacturer of a product who is established in the EU;
- A person established in the EU, holding himself out as the manufacturer, for example by selling private label products under his own brand ("own-branders");
- A person established in the EU who reconditions the product;

- A person established in the EU who represents a manufacturer from outside the EU;
- Where there is no EU representative of the manufacturer, the importer into the EU;
- Other professionals in the supply chain who affect the safety of the product.

“Other professionals in the supply chain” is not legally defined. It was on this point (ie whether the installer was an “other professional” for the purposes of the GPSR) that the case made the ground-breaking ruling.

In his case, the defendant supplied and fitted fireplaces for a living. His work included the removal of old stoves, plates and chimney liners and replacing them with new equipment including flue liners and canopies. The defendant quoted the complainant for the removal of the current stove, plate and chimney liner and its replacement with a fire basket and fire back.

The old stove register plate and old chimney liner were removed by the defendant and the chimney was then swept before the new basket and back were installed.

An independent engineer who inspected the installation found that the fittings had been installed incorrectly and incompetently. The hood and flue liner were too small and did not comply with UK building regulations.

The local authority prosecuted my client under the GPSR and argued that whilst the fireplace was being renovated, the defendant installed a flue liner and a canopy in such a way to render them unsafe products.

We stated, on behalf of the defendant, that the safety properties of the product were not affected by the defendant's activities. Such an act must involve a physical alteration of the properties of the product, so that in normal and foreseeable conditions of use, the item created a risk which was not consistent with a high level of protection for the safety and health of relevant persons. It was also submitted that an installer only assumes responsibility for the safety of the product if they alter or interfere in any way with the item prior to sale to the consumer. It is accepted that a product can be rendered unsafe by the manner of its installation but only in so far as it is altered or changed in any material fashion.

The court's decision

The court ruled that a “professional (other) person” as defined in section 2 of the GPSR could (and did, in this case) include an installer because the act of installing a product can affect its viability and safety. Crucially, this is the case even if the product itself is free from defects.

Ultimately the defendant was found not guilty in this case. He won his case based on the facts (the installation was deemed incomplete – he was performing regular tests and diagnostic checks during his works to rectify the problems with the chimney) and he therefore escaped conviction.



However, the approach by the prosecution and court raises serious questions about who exactly falls within the ambit of GPSR and who could be liable for providing defective products. Anyone who installs a product must be aware that this decision means they could be prosecuted under the GPSR for 'providing an unsafe product' by virtue of its installation. This should be taken seriously, as failure to comply with the GPSR can lead to fines and/or imprisonment. There is also the risk of potential prosecution for installers under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 for failing to conduct their undertaking in such a way so as to ensure the health and safety of non-employees (eg domestic clients, sub contractors or members of the public), which can also lead to significant fines and/or imprisonment in accordance with the 2016 Health and Safety Sentencing Guidelines.

How does competency help?

To avoid being subjected to enforcement action by the authorities, these 'dutyholders' may wish to seek specialist regulatory legal advice to assess the impact of such prosecutions, which may be on the increase in light of the recent focus on the effectiveness of UK building regulations and fire safety enforcement.

My client's case highlighted the need to carry out work competently to avoid the suggestion that their work was potentially unsafe and incompetent due to the way their work was carried out. But what do we mean by competence?

Since the revised CDM Regulations in 2015, we have seen the requirement for 'competence' replaced with a requirement for 'skills, knowledge, experience and training' and 'organisational capability'. But is competence about even more than this? It may be slightly easier to demonstrate skills, knowledge and experience by way of reference to a universal framework that sets a benchmark within the industry, which seem to have been adopted by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education – particularly for apprentices:

- Skills: Practical application of knowledge needed to successfully undertake work activities.
- Knowledge: Technical training and 'know how' that the individual needs to understand how to carry out their duties.
- Experience: Enhanced knowledge or skill acquired by a period of practical experience.

Coupled with the recommendations made in the Hackitt review after the Grenfell fire that suggested that dutyholders should only make and accept appointments where the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and organisational capability are in evidence, it seems that competence will continue to play a big part in assessing whether someone is in breach of safety legislation in the event of an incident, or even just the presence of a risk of injury to relevant persons. One likely outcome of the Hackitt review is the increase in prosecutions,

and a lack of competence or training will provide ammunition for enforcing authorities to criticise the dutyholder and prosecute under a raft of available legislation, which could result in large fines or even imprisonment being imposed.

In addition, the recent government review into building safety focuses heavily on working together: Co-operating, coordinating, sharing information and liaising with other dutyholders and the regulator. The sharing of 'knowledge' in this way can also demonstrate competence. This is why it is important to ensure that there is a strong awareness of safety issues on site and staff and site managers should be fully appraised of situations as they arise.

Limit the risk

This brings me on to my final point on how to limit the risk of liability for dutyholders in respect of safety breaches, by focusing on changes in culture or 'attitude'. I understand that the finishes and interiors sector has been looking at workforce management and the development of teams in terms of skill, attitude, knowledge and experience (SAKE). It might seem like a new concept to introduce 'attitude' into the equation when assessing competency, but it isn't as new as one might think.

The IOD / HSE Guidance (Leading H&S at Work) guidance document (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg417.pdf) talks about senior management failings (in the context of corporate manslaughter) including poor "attitudes, policies, systems or accepted practices". The guidance also discusses the idea of celebrating good safety practice, and that will only occur with proactive, robust health and safety management.

Many of the recent prosecutions against individuals relate to the skilled worker failing to perform competently in carrying out their tasks. Competency issues that arise from a lack of care when performing a work activity points to a lacklustre attitude that fosters bad habits and learned behaviours.

So, while my client was able to avoid a guilty verdict by confirming that he had not yet completed the installation and that he was maintaining contact with the client, others may not be so lucky. Most prosecutions are brought when the project is finished and by then, it can be tricky to defend criticisms based on competency. The fact that enforcing authorities can now use consumer-based legislation for providing defective products (as well as HSWA and CDM for acting in an 'unsafe' manner) to prosecute installers or manufacturers is worrying – and only a proactive, competent dutyholder will be able to successfully defend such allegations.



Kizzy is guest speaker at the FIS London Contractor Forum on 5 November, visit www.thefis.org/events for more details



Kizzy Augustin

Kizzy is a health, safety, fire and environmental partner and solicitor advocate at Russell Cooke Solicitors who regularly represents clients at court, enforcement notice appeals and coroners' inquests. She provides strategic advice to a number of high-profile corporate and commercial clients – both contentious advice in response to an actual incident, and preventative consultancy advice in relation to corporate policies and procedures to ensure compliance with key fire and health & safety legislation, as well as other associated regulations.

She has significant experience in defending companies, senior directors and employees in corporate manslaughter and serious fire / health and safety prosecutions and she regularly challenges improvement and prohibition notices on their behalf. Kizzy has a particular interest in the law relating to directors and other dutyholder health and safety duties within the construction, care homes, environmental, manufacturing, fire, rail and retail industries.

Kizzy regularly speaks on expert panels relating to health and safety / corporate manslaughter issues and has hosted many seminars and lectures on aspects of health and safety and criminal regulatory law, often as a keynote speaker.

Kizzy joined Russell-Cooke as a partner in 2018 having previously worked at an international law firm leading their health and safety team

STANDING UP FOR THE SMES

Stephanie Cornwall talks to incoming FIS president **Helen Tapper** about her career path, how she came to be in the role, and what causes she is passionate about.

“When you are coming from a small contracting company, the board can seem quite far removed from that section of the membership... bridging that gap will be my focus.”

CHAMPIONING the cause of small contractors and diversity will be focal points for new FIS president Helen Tapper, who takes up the mantle this month.

Helen, a mother-of-two, has spent almost two decades working in the fit-out industry and holds the title of finance director at Banbury-based Tapper Interiors, a family-run business set up 35 years ago, of which her husband is the second generation.

Born in Leicestershire, Helen began her working life as an electrical engineer in the materials handling and logistics industry. Her move into the interiors sector came 17 years later while she was on maternity leave with her second daughter.

“My husband has been in interiors all his life, so it was his family business. A lot of the things in the office needed computerising. As I was on maternity leave, it was natural for me to step in as I had the skills needed to help,” she said. “19 years later, I am still there! I ended up staying and we have grown the business together from there.”

With 84% of FIS members made up of contractors, and more than 60% of those having turnovers of less than £5m, Helen believes she is well-placed to represent the interests of those SMEs, many of whom, like Tapper Interiors, are family-run.

“That is pretty typical of a contracting business, particularly specialist contractors. A lot of them are definitely family affairs. It is a tough sector to be in. A lot of contractors work very long hours and it takes a mammoth effort from the whole family,” she said.

Providing a voice for SMEs

Helen said she first became aware of FIS around 15 years ago and played a key role in Tapper Interiors becoming a member. She put herself forward as a board member after attending several FIS events, seeing what the organisation had to offer businesses such as theirs and realising that she could contribute something that would help others.

“I found a lot of the things being talked about, particularly at the conference, were very relevant to me – the legal, financial and training side of the business. I felt these were all incredibly important to mitigate risk and to help the business expand. I realised I had quite strong opinions, and once I started putting those forward and I realised that I was being listened to I got drawn in! The more I got involved, it became more apparent, by our very nature, that it’s much more difficult for smaller contractors to be on the board, let alone become president, because we haven’t got the time, money or support.

“While there is a good mix of supplier and manufacturers and contractor members, many of the board contractor members tend to be from the big fit-out and drylining companies because they have more access to those things (time, money, support). When you are coming from a small contracting company, the board can seem quite far removed from that section of the membership, and I felt the smaller contractors needed more representation. Bridging this gap will be my focus,” she said.

Changes and improvements

Over the past decade, the finishes and interiors sector has seen a lot of positive changes, but there is still much to be done, Helen believes.

“I was aware of the interiors sector way before I joined the business, because I was married to someone who was working in it. But back then, on the whole, it was a little-known sector. Whenever people asked what you did, an explanation was always required. Within the past 10 years, there has been a massive progression. We are now a consensus federation. The fit-out and drylining sectors are much better perceived and have a higher profile. People now know what they are and that makes a massive difference,” she said. >>





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"Along with the recognition, there has been lots of technical advancements, with many more new products coming to market," said Helen.

She said FIS has been successful in raising its profile and membership, and part of her drive as president will be to provide smaller contractors with the opportunity to develop their businesses, providing them with access to all the help and information they need to do this, albeit in easily understandable and readily available formats.

"From a personal point of view, we have gone from a small contractor turning over £1.5m when I joined, to now turning over £6m so there has been a natural business progression along with that. I see the role of the FIS as helping contractors," she said. "One of the major roles of the FIS is to help people in that business progress, with all the problems that that entails – financial, technical and sometimes social. It is a lonely place being a contractor. A lot of us sit in our little bubbles, whatever area of the country you work in. There aren't that many of us – we are not surrounded by other businesses doing the same thing as us. We need a central hub to look to for advice. Construction is a risky business and being a specialist contractor adds a whole other level of risk. Being a contractor is all about being able to manage that risk."

She said finding the contracts in the first place, getting paid, looking after cash flow and finding a reliable workforce have been challenges for contractors for the past 30 years, and will continue to be so. FIS should provide them with the support they need to meet those challenges head-on.

She is also keen to ensure red tape and paperwork don't cause a headache for contractor members who are time-poor.

"Publication of data and legislation needs to be accessible to them in bite-size chunks that can be easily understood and applied to small businesses," she said. "There is a lot going on at high level that FIS needs to analyse and inform the membership in a simple and concise way to help us understand, quantify and mitigate the risk within our own businesses."

Championing diversity

As the first female contractor president, Helen says she will also be 'banging the drum' for equality and diversity and endeavouring to overcome some of the stereotypes that she believes are deterring more skilled personnel from entering the finishes and interiors sector.

"We have a national skills shortage in construction generally, but particularly in our sector," she said. "There are whole pools of talent out there that we are not drawing on, because we are just failing to attract them. If you are a woman, it is pretty intimidating if you want to become an apprentice, a fixer or a quantity surveyor. You have got to be quite a strong character to put yourself forward. Equally, I think minority groups can't imagine themselves working on site for the same

reason. I'm not saying there aren't any doing it, but there are probably more with the right skills set that are put off."

Because many smaller contractor members are family-run, women from those families are making important decisions and are very much part of the sector, so have a lot to offer in terms of experience and knowledge, said Helen.

"In some cases they are actually running the businesses from their offices, yet when I go to the events, I see hardly any women there. Maybe if I am standing in this role, as a woman, even if it encourages just a handful of them to come out of their offices to engage with us, it will have achieved something. They have important insights to share – they know what goes on in these businesses yet they are not engaging with us. It's a shame because I think they have got a lot to offer.

"I know it's scary. I won't pretend I'm not a little bit nervous and have also felt slightly intimidated in the past. But it's a case of 'if you can't see it, you can't be it', so maybe by seeing me in this role, it will encourage more women to come forward."

Passionate about apprenticeships

So does Helen see herself as a role model for more young women looking to enter the industry? She believes this comes from the bottom upwards, with the right opportunities and training being key to the future of the finishes and interiors sector, regardless of gender.

"I am passionate about apprenticeships. It certainly changed my life when I did an apprenticeship myself," said Helen. "That was a technician apprenticeship which was five years long, so it was very in-depth, but it certainly changed my life. It gave me a platform and the grounding to go on to train in other things. Apprenticeships are incredibly important for young people and I think they have got lost slightly in the obsession with getting to university and getting a degree in something which won't always necessarily help you in your career, and will leave you with a massive debt."

She said apprenticeship programmes within business should be encouraged but many can be put off because they are time consuming and expensive to run, therefore more help should be given in this area.

Having chaired the Trailblazer working group, Helen is particularly proud that the Level 2 Interior Systems Installer Trailblazer Apprenticeship is now in place, thanks to a host of industry partners and employers developing the standard. The apprenticeship also has an excellent £14K funding band. While Trailblazer apprenticeships have always existed within the traditional building trades, there was previously nothing similar for the finishes and interiors sector.

"This gives our sector the status and recognition that it so rightly deserves and is the shape of things to come," she said.



"We need a central hub to look to for advice. Construction is a risky business and being a specialist contractor adds a whole other level of risk. Being a contractor is all about being able to manage that risk."

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CONSTRUCTING EFFICIENCY FROM ABOVE



With six billion people estimated to be living in cities by 2050, how can ceilings help accommodate such growth? **Ian Clarke**, commercial technical manager for Armstrong Ceiling Solutions, discusses.

The construction industry is at a critical juncture. Headcounts worldwide are growing, and growing fast – and the projected numbers are staggering. It's predicted there will be nine billion people worldwide by 2050, with two out of every three living in cities by the same date. For those tasked with designing and building our cities, the challenges of such accelerated growth quickly add up. From skills shortages and needlessly complicated supply chains to a fear of embracing BIM, it's never been more important to face the challenge head on.

But what can be done today to help counter the increased building demand of tomorrow? Simply put, a drive towards greater construction efficiency. To this end, any opportunity for increased simplicity and proficiency should be welcomed. While the building envelope is an obvious focus for building faster and more effectively, the internal space should not be overlooked.

Start how you mean to go on

While the outside of a building goes a long way to define architectural appeal, it's the interior space which creates comfort and usability. By enhancing light and acoustics, ceilings are a critical aspect of this process, and they are an area where architects, specifiers and installers all stand to benefit from enhanced methodologies.

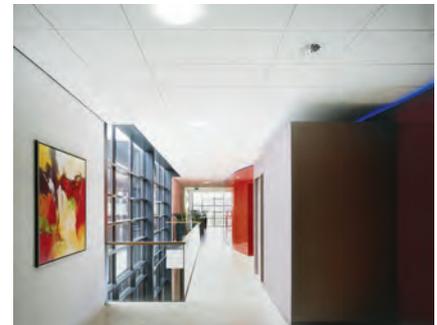
Involving ceiling manufacturers at the beginning of the design and specification stage is critical. In doing so, a more collaborative, transparent working environment is established where questions from all parties are openly asked and existing conventions are challenged. The result is that key concerns are raised earlier, leading to less rework down the line. A team that's working together clearly and cohesively also works more efficiently, which will become increasingly important as demand and population figures continue to rise.

On call with one call

In our always-on world, everyone expects to be able to get what they want with a single tap, click or call. The ceiling industry is no different. It's why, at Armstrong Ceiling Solutions, we provide everything from industry-leading products and expert support right through to training. For example, in the UK 90% of Armstrong products are available next day, while a 24-hour call-to-site service is also available. This approach aids efficiency by greatly simplifying supply chains and, in turn, minimising exposure to unforeseen delays.

Working the right way, right away

Increasingly, contractors are being asked to take on greater responsibility and become jacks of all construction trades. This is leading to increased levels of superficial knowledge and a move



to hiring generalists over specialists. While some short-term benefits may exist, the long-term inefficiencies in moving away from specialist expertise are likely to cause serious issues in terms of meeting demand and maintaining quality standards.

By realising this, we've made it a clear mission at Armstrong Ceiling Solutions to maintain specialisation and in-depth knowledge in contractors' skillsets, combining comprehensive training at the renowned Armstrong Installation School, technical support from our ceiling specialists and – in the UK - the Omega Contractor programme of Armstrong recognised specialist ceiling installers. As a result, contractors are able to draw on both their experience and comprehensive, targeted expertise in order to deliver best practice in terms of cost and construction efficiencies.

Win with BIM

The digital age is playing an ever-increasing role in all aspects of construction, meaning a meticulous attention to data is no longer a need, but a must. And Building Information Modelling (BIM) is set to play an ever more prominent role in terms of delivering ceiling construction efficiency.

The benefits of BIM are manifold, not least in terms of improving collaboration and enhancing decision-making. It also greatly reduces rework and eliminates costly duplication of drawings, freeing up talent and capital to be used elsewhere. Yet many within the industry are still not yet fully equipped to deal with BIM, preferring instead to rely on time-proven methodologies. But with just 30 years before we reach the estimated worldwide populace of nine billion, it's way past

time for the industry at large to embrace future-facing technologies and techniques; to look proactively at methods that will enable all of us to construct a more efficient future for all.

Building efficiency into products

While service and support help increase project efficiency, it's important also to consider the role of the products themselves – in terms of both ease of installation and environmental sustainability. In both cases, Armstrong Ceiling Solutions builds efficiency into its portfolio.

To complement our world-leading range of tiles, we've developed a range of highly engineered products - including grids and canopy kits – which simplify installation and maintenance, helping minimise time on site and accelerating project completion.

Last but not least, there's the efficiency in the products themselves. Currently, some 60% of all materials are used in creating and maintaining our built environment – with a significant amount ending their service life in landfill. Products which can be recycled and re-used therefore add value to the process as well as to our planet. Among Armstrong Ceiling Solution's range are a number of products certified as 'Cradle to Cradle' (C2C), which means they're responsibly manufactured and endlessly re-usable. Already a requirement for certain projects in the United States and Europe, C2C is sure to become more widespread, helping contractors provide transparency and protecting our environment for future generations.

To learn more about how Armstrong Ceiling Solutions can help you construct a more efficient future, visit www.armstrongceilings.co.uk.

TRAINING RECOGNISED AS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY

By **Amanda Scott**, FIS sector skills engagement manager

It was encouraging to see a healthy turnout of training providers, contractors, suppliers and assessors at the launch of the New Interior Systems Installer Apprenticeship Standard. In the room we had a coalition of the willing and recognition that this is a huge opportunity not just to refresh a qualification for England, but to reset and focus again on how we can work together, not just to grow the number of apprentices in the sector, but to renew our efforts to strengthen the training network, improve support and attract the right people to work in this critical part of construction industry.

The FIS ApprENTICE programme exists to support employers in taking on apprentices and below we look at some of the common questions that crop up when we talk to employers about funding for and recruitment of apprenticeships:

What is the difference between the Apprenticeship Levy and the CITB Levy?

Only employers that pay more than £3m in wages are liable to pay the apprenticeship levy. Levy-paying employers contribute 0.5 per cent of their pay bill into a fund each month, which can be reinvested and utilised in apprenticeship training for your business. And for every £1 contributed, the government adds 10p. If an employer does not pay the levy the government will still fund 90 per cent of the cost of your apprenticeship training. Employer is

expected to pay any excess, above funding, to the fees charged by Training Providers.

The CITB Levy is used to encourage training, in the case of apprenticeships, it is not and has never been used to pay for training apprentices. The CITB levy instead supports employers with the additional costs associated with apprentices.

So if the training is covered by the Government, what CITB grants am I entitled to when I take on an apprentice?

The CITB grants are reviewed each year, up to April 2020 you are entitled to claim the CITB annual attendance grant meaning each year you can claim £2500 per apprentice. Secondly you can also claim the CITB Achievement Grant of £600 on completion of the apprenticeship standard. For a two-year apprenticeship that's a minimum of £5600. If the evidence used to complete an English apprenticeship, where a vocational qualification is not included, is assessed under the vocational qualification and the candidate successfully completes the work there is a further £600 per qualification available. CITB grant for up to four vocational qualifications can be claimed in one lifetime.

The CITB has recently offered £500 to small employers who either pay no levy, or pay the reduced rate of levy, for every apprentice that has started college or with another training provider, from 1 August

2019. (Subject to the eligibility criteria)

Finally, you can still claim up to £10,250 in CITB grants as CITB Levy payers over three years to help cover the costs of taking on an apprentice.

I have a vacancy for an apprenticeship but get little response back? How can you help me attract an apprentice?

You can speak with your local college at the start of the academic year and present your opportunity to them, but this will only account for a small pool of people. You must widen your opportunity coverage. The FIS skills team will guide you through widescale advertising and application attraction, but here are some easy steers for you to follow.

- Design your apprenticeship job specification and general apprenticeship vacancy advert for distribution.
- All apprenticeship opportunities must appear on the government apprenticeship website. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- To upload your apprenticeship opportunity to the UK government website you must complete a AVOL (Apprentice Vacancy On Line) template and send to CITB for upload.
- Maximise coverage by uploading your apprenticeship vacancy to FIS Job Spot. The FIS will lead a digital social media recruitment campaign additionally across all our digital platforms.
- Ensure the vacancy appears in your own website and social media channels where applicable.

Bear in mind if your head office is in a different region to the contract that requires apprentices, you should advertise in the site zones. For example, if you are based in Oxford and your contract sites are in central London, it will be very difficult to get an apprentice to site via public transport for a 7.30am start time from Oxford.

It is important to note that apprenticeship schemes and frameworks are different in each Nation of the UK and in some cases there may be funding available to employers from Local Enterprise Partnerships.

For more details look at If you are interested in taking on an apprentice, call the FIS Skills Team on 0121 707 0077.



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