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## renewed focus investment, innovation and resilience

As we open the year, this month's edition delivers a clear and encouraging message: despite continued pressure on volumes and margins, the sector is responding with investment, sharper products and a renewed focus on doing things better.

2026 starts with a refreshingly practical launch from advertiser Roof in a Box. Their new aluminium lantern system is both cost-effective, at £295 per roof kit, but more importantly, is designed to be cut to size from the box, making it ideal for manufacturers who want to make their own lanterns and not carry any stock. Simply order the kit with the colour you want and it arrives next day. With no setup requirements, multi-kit discounts, free software and their team of technical support staff, Roof In A Box makes the transition from a buyer to a manufacturer simple. The roof kits come with everything that is needed to make a roof up to 2950mm x 1650mm and any size in between, Glass excluded. This brand-new concept, in roof design and supply, puts their customers in the driving seat. With kits available from stock, waiting for your lantern to be delivered is a thing of the past. The free software supplied, produces cutting sheets, glass sizes, quotes and invoices, everything you need to be your own aluminium lantern roof fabricator.

Longevity and consistency remain powerful themes. Celebrating 40 years, Secondary Glazing Master, Fletcher Fabrications and N E Fasteners all demonstrate how steady evolution can outperform short-term thinking. Fletcher Fabrications' growth from a turnover of around £400,000 to more than £1 million annually since the Covid period is a strong example of what happens when traditional values are paired with modern processes and

an expanded product mix. Alongside this, Secondary Glazing Master's ongoing work on listed and heritage buildings continues to show the value of secondary glazing as a practical route to improved thermal comfort and acoustic performance without full window replacement.

Security innovation is another standout this month. Kenrick's AK SecureCore cylinder achieving Sold Secure Diamond Standard 2024 and a Kitemark 3 Star rating marks a meaningful technical milestone. Resistance to snapping, drilling, bumping, gluing and freezing, combined with 11 pins and over 800,000 key combinations, raises the baseline for what installers can confidently specify. Add in a £5,000 security guarantee, and it's clear why Kenrick reports strong early feedback. Yale's expanded Lifetime Total Trust Guarantee reinforces the same direction of travel, pairing PAS24-accredited hardware with tangible financial reassurance for homeowners.

On the manufacturing side, targeted capital investment continues to pay dividends. Pioneer's adoption of the Graf SLS CNC cill welder is a reminder that quality gains often come from removing inefficiencies. Seamless welds, automated sprue removal and single-operator use reduce rework, labour dependency and waste, while delivering a visibly higher finish. Haffner's 100-year milestone provides useful context here too, with machinery such as the SMR-5 five-head welder reportedly allowing a single operative to weld twice as many frames as a standard quad system.

Product momentum is also evident. DoorCo reports a 300% rise in Eaton door sales during the latter part of 2025, driven by its 2100mm x 950mm standard size, design flexibility and Part M-friendly accessibility credentials. FrameXpress exceeding £1 million in aluminium sales in its first full year further underlines growing installer confidence in higher-spec systems that arrive ready to fit.

Taken together, this month's stories point to an industry that is adjusting with intent. Technical standards are rising, investment is being made where it counts, and practical innovation continues to create opportunity for those prepared to move decisively.

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The Vision Magazine cover for January 2026 features a large advertisement for 'Roof in a Box'. The ad includes a graphic of a house with a roof labeled 'roof in a box', the text 'It's all there, in the box', and 'No stock. No setup. No waiting.' Below this, it says 'All kits supplied unglazed' and '£295'. It also mentions 'Makes any size lantern up to 2.95m x 1.65m'. The headline 'Make Your Very Own Aluminium Lanterns' is followed by the subtext 'It really is that easy, see what people are saying about us'. There are several five-star reviews from users like 'Fitter Glass', 'Motor UK', and 'Semi-Balcony Projects'. At the bottom, there's a QR code, the email 'info@roofinabox.co.uk', and the phone number 'Tel 0333 049 0162'.



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# yale expands lifetime total trust guarantee

[yaledws.co.uk](http://yaledws.co.uk)

**Yale has unveiled its expanded Lifetime Total Trust Guarantee – delivering one of the most comprehensive security guarantees on the market and giving fabricators, installers and homeowners a powerful new level of reassurance.**

The enhanced guarantee applies to all complete PAS24-accredited windows and doors, including patio sliding doors, bi-fold doors, and tilt-and-turn hardware. In the event of a break-in, end users can benefit from up to £5,000 in support and compensation, including:

- £2,000 towards repairs/replacements
- £1,500 towards home insurance excess
- £1,000 compensation
- £500 towards call-out fees
- 10% discount at [yalehome.co.uk](http://yalehome.co.uk)

"The new Yale Lifetime Total Trust Guarantee demonstrates just how confident we are in the security of our products," comments Paul Gravell, Sales Director at Yale. "With significantly increased compensation levels, it provides our customers with an even stronger product, and end-users with greater peace of mind than ever before."

Having evolved from a leader in mechanical lock engineering to innovating connected smart locks and homes, Yale today offers a complete range of security solutions. All of these are designed, developed, and rigorously tested to meet the most stringent industry requirements.

The company's wide portfolio of Secured by Design-approved hardware includes high-security multipoint door locks, cylinders that meet the latest TS007-1:2024 standards, and TS008:2022 letterplates. As part of the ASSA ABLOY Group, Yale also provides an unbeatable range of complementary security products, including from Mila, providing fabricators and installers with a fully integrated solution.

Paul continues: "For over 180 years, Yale has been trusted by millions of people to protect their homes, families and belongings. We were there for your grandparents, and probably theirs – and we'll be there for your children, today and every day to come."



"With the Yale Lifetime Total Trust Guarantee, our customers benefit from an association with a leading, historical brand trusted by millions of people every day to keep what's important to them safe. This makes Yale the ultimate choice for fabricators and installers looking for the competitive edge that will enhance their sales."

## saint-gobain glass wins two awards

[saint-gobain-glass.co.uk](http://saint-gobain-glass.co.uk)

**Saint-Gobain Glass is celebrating double success at this year's Glass Focus Awards, organised by British Glass, after being named the winner in both the Sustainable Practice and Design of the Year categories. The accolades recognise the company's continued leadership in circularity, low-carbon innovation and sustainable building design.**

Saint-Gobain Glass secured the Design of the Year award for the transformation of 30 Duke Street, the UK's first commercial refurbishment project to use Glass Forever, the company's circular economy approach to flat glass recycling. Glass recovered from the building's original facade will be remanufactured into high-performance, lower-carbon flat glass and reinstalled as part of the £75m renovation. The result will be a highly energy-efficient

building with substantially reduced embodied and operational carbon, setting a new benchmark for sustainable commercial retrofit.

The company also claimed the Sustainable Practice award for the long-term impact of its pioneering Glass Forever programme. Since 2001, close to one million tonnes of flat glass have been recovered, helping avoid the extraction of approximately 1.2 million tonnes of virgin raw materials and preventing around 700,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from entering the atmosphere. Working collaboratively with partners across glazing, construction and deconstruction, Saint-Gobain Glass continues to play a central role in closing the loop on flat glass waste in the UK.

Mike Butterick, Marketing Director at Saint-Gobain Glass, said: "We are absolutely delighted to win two awards that reflect the heart of what we do as a business. Glass Forever is a long-standing commitment to circularity and carbon reduction, and seeing it recognised in both categories is incredibly rewarding. Our work at 30 Duke Street shows what is possible when we rethink how buildings are designed and refurbished, and these awards are a testament to the talent and dedication of our teams and partners."



The wins follow Saint-Gobain Glass UK's shortlisting in four categories overall, highlighting the company's broad contributions to sustainability, innovation, health and safety, and responsible manufacturing across the glass industry.

The Glass Focus Awards ceremony took place on Thursday 20 November 2025 at the Manchester Marriott Hotel Piccadilly, bringing together organisations from across the UK to celebrate excellence and progress in glass manufacturing.

## framexpress hits £1m

[framexpress.co.uk](http://framexpress.co.uk)

**Framexpress has announced its aluminium range has exceeded £1 million in sales in its first full year of operation, marking a significant milestone in the company's long-term investment in Ali by Framexpress.**

mark so quickly confirms what we are seeing across the industry. Installers are ready to do more with aluminium when the offer feels straightforward, well supported and built around how they work day-to-day. The response to the range has been incredibly positive, and we are now focused on strengthening it even further for 2026."

The Ali by Framexpress CLUB of products includes aluminium casement and flush windows, heritage windows and doors, entrance doors, patio doors, bifold doors, rooflights, roof lanterns and commercial doors. The past year has also seen several additions and refinements rolled out across the range, including built-in trickle vents, heritage door options and the introduction of a triple track patio system.

Jonny added, "Installers want aluminium that arrives ready to fit, performs exactly as expected and helps them stand out on every project. That is what has driven the early success of the range. We're seeing more existing uPVC customers introduce aluminium for the first time, and others using it to grow their share of higher-value work." The business says demand for aluminium is expected to rise

Launched in 2024, the aluminium range has grown rapidly as more installers look to diversify their portfolios and offer higher specification products to homeowners, commercial clients and developers. The business attributes the early momentum to a combination of reliable fabrication, a higher spec as standard across the range and consistent On-Time, In-Full delivery.

Jonny Green, Principal Product Manager at Framexpress, explains: "Reaching the £1 million



further in 2026, driven by homeowner appetite for slimmer sightlines, long-term durability and higher specification upgrades.

Framexpress will continue expanding the aluminium collection in the year ahead, alongside additional installer support and enhanced product resources designed to make quoting, ordering and installation even more straightforward.

# momentum eases as seasonal patterns take hold

neil cooper-smith, senior analyst, business pilot:

As we move through the final months of the year, the data reflects a market responding in a way that aligns closely with typical seasonal patterns. Activity held steady through September and October before softening into November, a shift that is consistent with the period and indicative of homeowners becoming more measured in their decision-making as winter approaches.

Conversion rates have been one of the more stable indicators, rising from 39.8% in September, to 40.7% in October, and 41.4% in November. This steady upward trend suggests that although enquiry levels fluctuate, those progressing into the sales pipeline are generally committed and well qualified.

Installers appear to be managing these opportunities effectively, maintaining strong engagement even as overall activity eases. The resilience in conversion performance at this point in the year demonstrates that businesses are continuing to secure work from a more selective pool of prospects.

Lead volumes remained relatively flat between September (105.6) and October (105.8), a minor 0.2% increase that points to consistent early-autumn demand. However, the drop to 90.3 in November represents a more pronounced 14.6% decline, reflecting the familiar seasonal slowdown as households divert attention toward Christmas and delay non-essential decisions until the New Year.

Sales figures followed a similar trajectory. Volumes rose from 49.3 in September to 53.5 in October, an 8.5% increase, before slumping 16.3% to 44.8 for November – a level more in line with what we tend to see heading into winter. This mirrors historical behaviour; October often bringing a final push before year-end planning and budgeting take over, where installers experience a short burst of activity before a predictable contraction in demand.

Average order values showed greater variation across the period. October saw a marked increase to £4,647.84 from £3,736.31 in September, reflecting a strong month for higher value projects as homeowners committed to larger installations ahead of winter. November's reduction to £3,665.75 represents a return to more typical levels, consistent with households prioritising seasonal and day-to-day spending over bigger ticket

improvements as the year-end approaches.

Lead times continued their downward trend, falling 3.7% from 27 days in September to 26 days in October, and then decreasing a further 11.5% to 23 days in November. This highlights both a natural push to complete work before the end of the year and customers acting more decisively where seasonal factors, such as energy-efficient improvements, play a key role. It also reflects continued improvements in operational efficiency despite fluctuating volumes.

All of this sits against a backdrop of ongoing economic caution. Following the uncertainty driven by the recent Budget, and with inflation still above the Bank of England's target while mortgage rates remain elevated, many homeowners are taking a measured approach to financial commitments. The steadiness seen early in the quarter, followed by November's predictable cooling, points to a market that remains active but increasingly sensitive to wider pressures.

For installers, the message is clear: every opportunity carries more weight as we head into the New Year. Maintaining strong pipeline visibility and consistent engagement will ensure you are in the best position to convert meaningful interest into confirmed work.



## freefoam cork plant now powered by 100% renewable energy

[freefoam.com](http://freefoam.com)

from a mix of resources including some solar and wind energy. Kevin Cronin, Chief Operating Officer, commented, "Freefoam has set clear and ambitious sustainability targets. Transitioning to renewable electricity is a major step toward reducing our carbon emissions and building a more sustainable future."

This initiative is part of a broader strategy to embed sustainable business practices across Freefoam's operations. Dedicated energy teams at each site are actively exploring ways to improve efficiency and reduce energy consumption. "This change is something all businesses can take on," Kevin added. "We believe it's the right choice and one that quantifiably reduces our greenhouse gas emissions."

With numerous projects underway, Freefoam is accelerating its circular economy activities. "We're on a journey," Kevin concluded. "Our aim is to put reduce, re-use, and recycle at the heart of everything we do."

This move positions Freefoam as a future-fit organisation and a responsible partner for customers seeking sustainable solutions.

Freefoam Building Products is proud to announce that its Cork manufacturing facility is now operating entirely on renewable energy. This milestone marks a significant achievement in Freefoam's five-year Sustainability Plan, launched earlier this year, and reinforces the company's commitment to environmental responsibility.

The Cork plant, which runs 24/7 producing long lasting building products, now sources its electricity

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# 2026 annual predictions

warmerroof.com

## New Year, Same Plan, Different Challenges.

And like that, another year goes by. Some desperate for the year to eclipse into the next, whilst some wishing for the standard twelve month year to become fifteen. 2026 is shaping up to be a similar landscape that we've come to know too well, with confidence continuing at its all time low with the anti-business policy driven government, it's understandable that pessimism is shared amongst many peers in the industry. The days of "growth by default" are gone; the companies that hold their nerve, protect their margins, and double down on operational discipline will be the ones still standing by Q4.

Last year in my annual predictions, we had predicted cautious growth here at Warmer Roof, and expectations were well exceeded. But, not to the detriment of our core values that some concede in a desperation to get business in. We have continued the upwards trajectory by sharing the same principles that our partners do.

With these times and the introduction of AI being the shiny new toy, I feel our industry will claw at it's use case at every opportunity, funnelling it into all aspects of business – some even where it's not required. Reliance on this takes away the innovation and experience to push a competitive edge, slowly removing the very instincts that built our sector in the first place.

AI will absolutely streamline quoting, speed up admin, and help businesses look more polished online. But it doesn't understand the nuance of an onsite challenge, or the judgement call made at 7:45am when a delivery needs rerouting, or the real world implications of a millimetre tolerance on a bespoke roof panel. Too many will forget that. They'll over-automate, under communicate, and trust a system that simply doesn't have the scars, intuition, or context to be the final decision maker on a job that carries liability.

This tech can be a force multiplier, no doubt but only when it enhances experience, not replaces it. The companies that lose sight of that will end up with faster processes but weaker outcomes, eventually diluting the very craftsmanship and reliability that customers in our space are paying for.

And that's where I think 2026 creates a real competitive divide.

That's why we're positioning ourselves to step into the gaps the market has left behind:

- Faster lead times, without compromising quality.
  - Predictable pricing.
  - A joined-up offering with our partners, where exclusivity and specification matter more than ever.
  - A brand that speaks the language of trust, not transactional quick wins.

2026 isn't about survival. It's about strategic elevation and levelling up.

And Warmer Roof is walking into that space with momentum, clarity, and zero intention of slowing down.



# pioneer invests in seamless welder

haffnerltd.com

Pioneer Trading Company has further strengthened its manufacturing capabilities with the purchase of the groundbreaking Graf SLS Single Head CNC Cill Welder from Haffner. The state-of-the-art machine is the first and only single-head CNC welder specifically designed to deliver seamless bay cills with exceptional efficiency and consistently flawless aesthetics.



and saw the Graf SLS in action that I fully appreciated its capability. After just one weld cycle, I was sold and signed up there and then.

Danny was equally impressed with the service received from Haffner during the purchasing process. He said: "Bryan Dando and the Haffner team have been exceptional; the whole process from order to installation has been seamless."

Now fully installed and operational at Pioneer's Essex fabrication site, the response from customers has been overwhelmingly positive. Danny added: "The feedback has been excellent, and the quality of the cills we are now delivering are superb."

Bryan Dando, Commercial Director at Haffner, commented: "Pioneer has always been known for its commitment to quality and forward-thinking investment. Danny immediately recognised how the Graf SLS could transform cill production. The SLS delivers outstanding accuracy and efficiency and we are delighted to support Pioneer as they continue to elevate their manufacturing standards."

Pioneer's investment in the Graf SLS CNC Cill Welder further reinforces its position as one of the industry's most innovative and quality-driven fabricators, ensuring every component of its window and door products meets the exceptional standards customers expect.

## talking shop

peopleinglazing.co.uk



Glazpart is pleased to announce a series of new events for 2026 in partnership with PiGs (People in Glazing Society).

The new event called "Talking Shop with Glazpartners" is in conjunction with the five PiGs events across the UK in 2026. The sessions sponsored by Glazpartners, will take place an hour before the PiGs events in the same venues, and will have technical experts from Glazpartners present for informal discussions.

Dean Bradley, Glazpart Sales Director commented "Glazpartners was started two and a half years ago and has grown to sixty five companies across the supply chain. It was set up to encourage greater collaboration between us and our customers and partners. The five Talking Shop events in 2026 will be the ideal platform for companies to discuss issues with experts in an informal setting."

Glazpart has already had invitations accepted from technical consultants and

technical staff from professional bodies such as GGF (Glass and Glazing Federation) and CAB (Council for Aluminium in Building) to take part in the new events, which start at 4pm before all PiGs social events in 2026.

"Talking Shop" offers companies a chance to discuss the issues that matter most to their business with experts who can help with ideas, information and solutions.

The dates and venues of the PiGs events are spread across the UK throughout the year:

26 Feb - Birmingham (Revolucion de Cuba)

23 April - Belfast (Whites Tavern)

25 June - Bristol (Brown and Bye)

24 Sep - Newcastle (Pitcher and Piano)

12 Nov - Manchester (Revolucion de Cuba)

Dean Bradley added, "We always look forward to seeing everyone at the PiGs. If you are going to any of the PiGs events in 2026, why not come an hour early, meet the experts and enjoy the pre-event hospitality."

Anyone working in the glass and glazing sector can book their place at PiGs on their website

# kenrick launches new high-security cylinder

[kenricks.co.uk](http://kenricks.co.uk)

Longstanding hardware supplier Kenrick has announced the launch of its new AK SecureCore 3 Star high-security cylinder, developed to deliver exceptional protection against today's most sophisticated break-in methods.

With more than two centuries of hardware innovation behind it, Kenrick continues to build on its reputation for reliable, UK-designed products that meet the evolving security needs of fabricators and installers across the industry.

AK SecureCore has achieved the Sold Secure Diamond Standard 2024, the most demanding cylinder certification available and carries the Kitemark 3 Star rating. It has been designed to resist every major form of attack, including picking, bumping, drilling, snapping, gluing and freezing. Featuring 11 pins and more than 800,000 key combinations alongside patented ALPS anti-manipulation

technology, it offers a level of resilience far beyond that of conventional cylinders. Its reinforced anti-snap design and excess-discharge vents further enhance its defence against destructive or substance-based attacks, ensuring dependable performance in the most challenging conditions.

Andy Meakin, Sales and Marketing Manager at Kenrick, said: "AK SecureCore represents a significant step in our commitment to delivering reliable, high-performance security hardware solutions. The response from early users has been extremely positive and we believe AK SecureCore will quickly establish itself as a go-to cylinder for fabricators, installers and locksmiths who value security, ease of installation and long-term reliability."

Homeowners who choose AK SecureCore can also activate the £5,000 security guarantee by registering their lock, demonstrating the confidence the company places in its testing processes and product durability. AK SecureCore has undergone rigorous assessment both



in specialist laboratories and through hands-on locksmith evaluation to ensure it performs consistently across all scenarios.

Importantly, AK SecureCore integrates seamlessly with Kenrick's AK Touch Secure smart door lock, allowing homeowners to combine advanced mechanical strength with the latest connected technology. Andy commented: "The AK Touch Secure, which has achieved Secured by Design accreditation and IASME IoT Cyber

Assurance Level Two, can be fitted to any door handle equipped with a Kenrick 3 Star cylinder, making AK SecureCore the ideal pairing for installers wanting to offer both physical and digital security in a single package."

He added: "Kenrick has always stood for quality, dependability and practical hardware innovation and AK SecureCore builds on that foundation and gives our customers a cylinder they can trust. Whether used as a standalone high-security solution or as part of a fully connected smart locking system, it has been developed to deliver outstanding protection and complete peace of mind."

## sts202-br2 success fuels demand

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

Jack Aluminium Systems has achieved STS202-BR2 approval for its TD68 thermal door system, confirming its capability to meet BR2-level security performance – equivalent to LPS1175 SR2. The approval has already acted as a catalyst for increased Q4 sales, as specifiers and fabricators look for aluminium alternatives to steel in high-security projects.

Historically, STS202-BR2 approvals have been achieved mainly by steel doorsets. The standard measures a door's ability to resist forced entry using a prescribed toolkit – typically including screwdrivers, hammers, chisels and small crowbars – to simulate the kind of opportunistic and sustained attacks a building might face in real-world conditions.

This accreditation demonstrates that the TD68 aluminium system achieves the same level of tested protection – while continuing to deliver the thermal efficiency, design flexibility



and fabrication simplicity that have made it a popular choice for commercial applications.

The latest test programme extends the TD68's approved configurations, adding manual locking and remote access options across single and double door assemblies, alongside a wide range of tested glass, panel and louvre combinations. These additions build on previous test applications, broadening the system's certified scope for specifiers and fabricators. "We've shown aluminium can go head-

to-head with steel on security – STS202-BR2 approval for the TD68 is now proof of that," says Jack Aluminium's Managing Director, Andy Short, who also highlights there are common misconceptions around the test standards.

"There's often confusion between STS202-BR2 and LPS1175 SR2. Both assess resistance to attack at the same level and are recognised demonstrations of enhanced security performance – the difference lies in the certification body, not the criteria,"

he explains. "Whether tested to STS202 or LPS1175, BR2 and SR2 represent equivalent levels of attack resistance. The important thing is that specifiers now have a proven aluminium alternative to steel."

With STS202-BR2 approval now added, Jack Aluminium's TD68 offers verified enhanced security performance, combined with the ease of fabrication and design versatility that make it the ideal choice for a wide range of commercial and public-sector projects.

# clearview new build secures four 'subcontractor of the month' awards

Clearview New Build has reinforced its reputation for quality, consistency and on-site professionalism after being awarded Subcontractor of the Month four times in the past quarter. This achievement is more impressive as they came on four different developments and were awarded by three different house builders.

The recognition reflects Clearview New Build's consistently high performance across key criteria, including site safety, installation quality, and on-time delivery.

With each award earned on a different development, the achievement highlights the company's ability to maintain standards across a broad and growing portfolio of live sites.

The company attributes this run of success to a strong operational culture built around experience, quality, and a "right first time" approach to fabrication, fitting and communication.

Backed by the scale, capability and product quality of CO Manufacturing, Clearview New Build has quickly established itself as a trusted partner for housebuilders seeking reliability, responsiveness and high installation standards on busy sites.

David Maybury, Divisional Head of Clearview New Build, said: "Being recognised four times in such a short period is a real testament to the consistency and professionalism of our team.

"Every development, every site and every contractor has different pressures, but our philosophy never changes. We focus on safety, quality and delivering on programme, and it's fantastic to see that recognised independently by several leading developers."

The business continues to expand across the North of England, supporting major developers with window and door installations across an increasing number of live sites.

"We're proud of the momentum we've built, but this is only the start," David added.

With more developments coming online and further investment in our people and processes, we're committed to continuing this level of



performance and helping housebuilders deliver homes efficiently, safely and to the standard buyers expect."

Clearview New Build's award wins underline the company's growing presence in the new-build sector and reinforce its position as a valued partner for developers seeking dependable subcontractors able to deliver at scale.

## modplan further strengthens its national sales team

[modplan.co.uk](http://modplan.co.uk)

Trade fabricator Modplan has further strengthened its national sales team with the appointment of Calum Williams as Business Development Manager (Midlands).

Modplan's reputation for quality and service is second to none. The company's focus on long-term partnerships and customer success really aligns with my own approach and I look forward to helping customers across the Midlands grow their businesses."

Calum will report directly to Liam Isaac, Modplan's Head of Sales and Marketing. Liam commented: "Calum is no stranger to the industry and brings a wealth of knowledge, energy and professionalism to the role. His customer-first mindset and proven ability to build strong relationships will be invaluable as we continue to expand our presence in the Midlands. He's a great fit for the Modplan team and our culture of continuous improvement."

As Business Development Manager (Midlands), Calum will focus on supporting Modplan's existing customer base while identifying and developing new opportunities across the region.

With over 50 years of experience, Modplan continues to lead the way in trade fabrication and supplying premium-quality PVC-U window, door and conservatory products across the UK. Operating from its impressive multi-site fabrication facilities near Newport, Gwent, the company offers one of the industry's most comprehensive product portfolios.



Calum's appointment further strengthens Modplan's national sales team and reinforces the company's commitment to delivering exceptional value to its partners.

## celebrating 40 years

[screwshop.co.uk](http://screwshop.co.uk)  
[nefasteners.co.uk](http://nefasteners.co.uk)

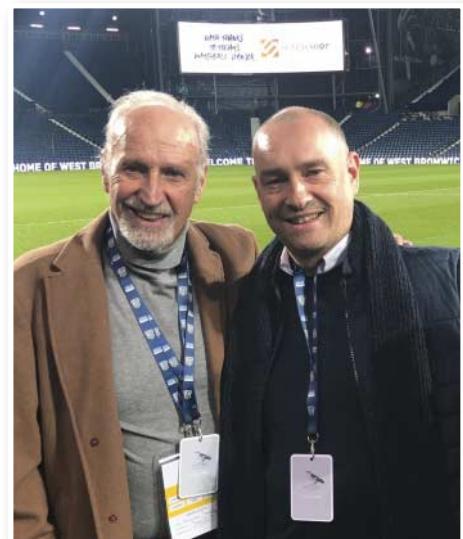
N E Fasteners and its online arm Screwshop.co.uk – the home of own brands Rhino and Turboqwik screws, are proud to be celebrating 40 years in the trade.

with us, his son Matt joined him in 2001, and the company has gone from strength to strength, now employing near 20 people in all departments including a very popular kitting and packaging line with new automated machinery running in early 2025.

Our year of celebrations has been filled with memorabilia recognising the journey N E Fasteners has taken within the crucial industry and the immense commitment from our team. Each team member was presented with a special 40-year gift box, personalised cupcakes and a relaxed afternoon off work.

Looking to the future, N E Fasteners aims to continue delivering value and building trusted relationships with its customers and suppliers and constantly having a strong customer led focus in person or with its e-commerce presence (Screwshop) to improve customers' buying experience on line.

Here's to fastening the future – together!



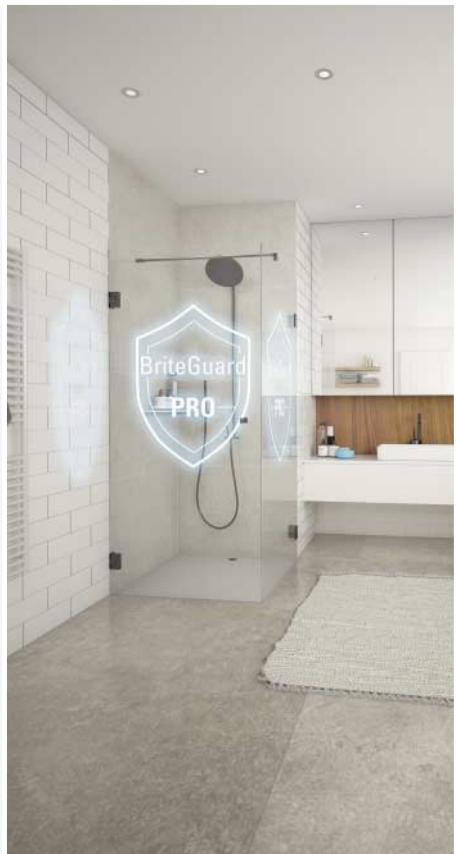
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## bohle reveals its number one upsell for shower installations

[bohle.com](http://bohle.com)

**BriteGuard® Pro**, Bohle's next-generation glass surface protection coating, has been developed precisely with those goals in mind. Designed as a single-product, one-step application, it has simplified what was once a multi-stage process into something fast, intuitive, and incredibly effective.

And for installers already fitting shower screens, it represents one of the easiest and most compelling upsells available today.

"What installers tell us time and time again is that their customers want glass that stays looking good without constant scrubbing or specialist cleaners," says Paul Miller, Bohle's National Sales Manager. "BriteGuard® Pro allows installers to offer exactly that. It adds real value to the installation, it's easy to apply on site, and it gives customers lasting protection they can see and feel from day one."

At the heart of BriteGuard Pro is its hydrophobic performance. Once applied, the coating forms a transparent, durable layer that prevents water, soap, dirt, and limescale from clinging to the glass. Instead, water simply beads

and runs off the surface, helping the enclosure stay cleaner for longer and significantly reducing the need for regular maintenance.

For homeowners, the benefits are immediate: no aggressive cleaning agents, fewer streaks, and noticeably clearer glass. For installers, it's an opportunity to offer premium protection at the point of installation, without adding complexity to the job.

In fact, simplicity is one of BriteGuard Pro's biggest strengths. The system has been engineered so the entire application can be completed in minutes: pre-clean, apply, wipe dry – done.

No curing equipment, no additional primers, and no specialist tools are required.

This makes it not only an easy upsell but also an efficient one, allowing installers to add value without affecting timelines.

Behind the simplicity, however, is serious performance. Independent testing has shown that BriteGuardPro withstands up to 100,000 wipe cycles, giving customers exceptional long-term protection. For installers, that durability makes it an upgrade they can recommend with complete confidence.

The coating is suitable for both interior and exterior applications – but it is in shower screens, where limescale and water spotting are everyday challenges, that it delivers its most visible benefits. A newly installed enclosure treated with BriteGuardPro simply stays cleaner and clearer for longer, helping homeowners maintain that pristine, just-fitted look with minimal effort.

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## regulation, costs and planning delays defined 2025 what will 2026 look like for uk new build?

Early 2025 saw housebuilders navigating multiple overlapping challenges. High interest rates suppressed buyer demand, while material inflation, energy costs and persistent labour shortages added significant pressure to project viability. While some of these challenges have 'eased', there is still some way to go.

Many developers entered the year with cautious optimism and an expectation that activity would lift in the second half of 2025. According to Eurocell's Head of New Build, Martin Benn, that recovery failed to materialise, due to a combination of subdued consumer confidence, persistent cost pressures and ongoing delays within the planning system. Together, these factors created a tougher-than-expected operating environment and held back the anticipated uplift in activity.

Martin said: "Affordability remains the biggest barrier. Without intervention to stimulate demand, and with borrowing still expensive for both buyers and developers, we've seen momentum stall. The appetite is there, but the conditions simply haven't aligned."

### Regulation: The sector's biggest unknown

Regulation has been another major source of uncertainty. The 2021 uplift to Approved Document L (ADL) required around a 31-35% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared with previous standards, increasing build costs through additional fabric measures, higher-performing windows, improved airtightness, PV arrays and mechanical ventilation.

ADL 2025 is expected to form part of the upcoming Future Homes Standard, currently anticipated to come into force soon, which targets a 75-80% reduction in whole-house emissions. While full details are still to be confirmed, the shift is set to significantly tighten performance requirements and reshape specification choices across the sector.

However, the delayed publication of ADL 2025 has left housebuilders unable to plan specifications, pricing or product choices with confidence.

Martin said: "Developers are effectively planning blind. Multiple parts of the building regulations, L, F, O, B and M, don't currently harmonise, and consultation documents have lacked detail. Uncertainty slows delivery, increases cost, and introduces risk into every step of the process."

Eurocell anticipates a period of rapid technical recalculation once ADL 2025 is released, as housebuilders push for marginal gains on U-values and performance criteria to achieve compliance. It expects technical teams across the country to play an increasingly crucial role in helping developers shape commercially viable specifications under the new rules.

### Building safety and sustainability: The shift continues

Alongside energy performance, the Building Safety Act continued to reshape responsibilities and liabilities throughout 2025, particularly in mid- and high-rise projects. Martin notes that the additional accountability introduced by the Act has already begun to shift the market: "We're seeing more scrutiny, more documentation, and a higher bar for product evidence. For some suppliers, that burden may prove too heavy. For others, it's an opportunity to demonstrate robustness and technical credibility."

Sustainability is also evolving rapidly. The growing adoption of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) is introducing new transparency into materials, giving recycled content and embodied carbon measurable, tradeable value. Eurocell expects sustainability data to become a core part of specification decisions in 2026 and beyond.

### Looking ahead: Opportunities for 2026

Despite the headwinds of 2025, Eurocell sees reasons for cautious optimism heading into 2026. Greater regulatory clarity, once delivered, is expected to unlock delayed projects and allow developers to move forward with confidence. Sector outlooks indicate a stabilising economic picture and increased focus on high-performance materials could also create new opportunities for manufacturers.

Martin adds: "The industry is resilient. What housebuilders need now is certainty - clear regulation, stable policy and practical guidance. Once that arrives, the sector will move quickly. Our focus at Eurocell is on supporting that transition with the right technical expertise, product development and data to help our customers meet the next stage of change."

As part of its support for the industry, Eurocell will also continue with its successful CPD programme designed to help housebuilders, specifiers and technical teams understand any potential conflicts within Approved Documents to meet Building Regulations, and how engaging with systems houses early can help overcome these challenges. The sessions provide practical guidance on expected changes, specification impacts, and how to achieve compliance efficiently.



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# high street installer backs the value of physical showrooms as market tightens

[gerdadoors.co.uk](http://gerdadoors.co.uk)

While many installation companies continue to prioritise digital channels, Upminster-based installer Ken Rhodes is making the case for the continued power of the high street—especially as homeowners grow more cautious in the current economic climate.

The business, founded in 1985 by Scottish carpenter Ken Rhodes Snr, remains rooted in its original high street location. Now run by his son and namesake, the company has gradually evolved its product range and marketing approach to reflect shifting customer expectations. Despite the modest frontage, the firm operates with the same entrepreneurial drive that has long defined the UK's independent window and door sector.

A key part of that evolution has been the introduction of the Gerda steel and aluminium entrance door range—installed as a full working sample in the showroom. According to Ken Rhodes, the decision was driven by growing demand for demonstrable security and premium build quality:

"When Pioneer introduced the Gerda door to us, we knew it was something a bit special," he said. "Security remains a real concern for many of our customers, so it's reassuring to have a product that can demonstrate high levels of secure locking that the more premium householder is seeking."

The timing is significant. Ken reports that leads are currently down by around 30%, and the typical sales cycle has extended from 28 days to 35. Homeowners, he argues, are increasingly selective:

"The typical customer today is less keen to take on any significant debt and is increasingly stringent in choosing quality when making a significant purchase."

In response, the business has adopted a more proactive marketing strategy. This includes data reactivation work, such as a recent SMS trial on 500 existing customers that generated seven appointments—a modest but welcome return at a time when every lead counts.

Ken adds that brand recognition remains a valuable driver, praising



Pioneer's support and the upcoming TV campaign for Gerda.

He also believes the wider industry has lost some of the visibility once generated by national players:

"The loss of some of the larger multinationals has probably affected the public perception of products as a whole—the millions that were once pumped into nationwide advertising is no longer there. The onus on us being more proactive has definitely increased."

Alongside retail installations, the company continues to service local commercial work, recently completing four Gerda door installations on a new-build development that required non-standard widths.

"Gerda fits that bill of being something a bit alternative, without compromising on aesthetics, nor whacking up the price," Ken said. "It's the perfect door brand to help us through the tougher months."

## are you feeding your sales staff with enough leads?

[leads2trade.co.uk](http://leads2trade.co.uk)

Andy Royle, Director and Co-Founder of Leads 2 Trade, explains how installers can start the new year with a bang!

"After almost two decades supplying double-qualified sales leads to the UK fenestration industry, one thing has never changed; when your sales team is hungry, you must have the leads ready to feed them."

And as we head into January, traditionally one of the strongest months for homeowner enquiries after the Christmas lull, the businesses that win are the ones prepared to strike early and capitalise on pent-up demand.

Across our online channels we have more campaigns running than we have ever had and we are seeing more homeowners actively seeking quotes for windows, doors, rooflines, conservatories and conservatory roof replacements.

What's particularly interesting is how this growing demand plays out across different postcodes. We work with installation companies of all sizes, from smaller firms that only want a couple of leads a day to larger regional installers capable of handling hundreds of enquiries every week.

With such strong volumes being generated across our campaigns, many smaller members regularly



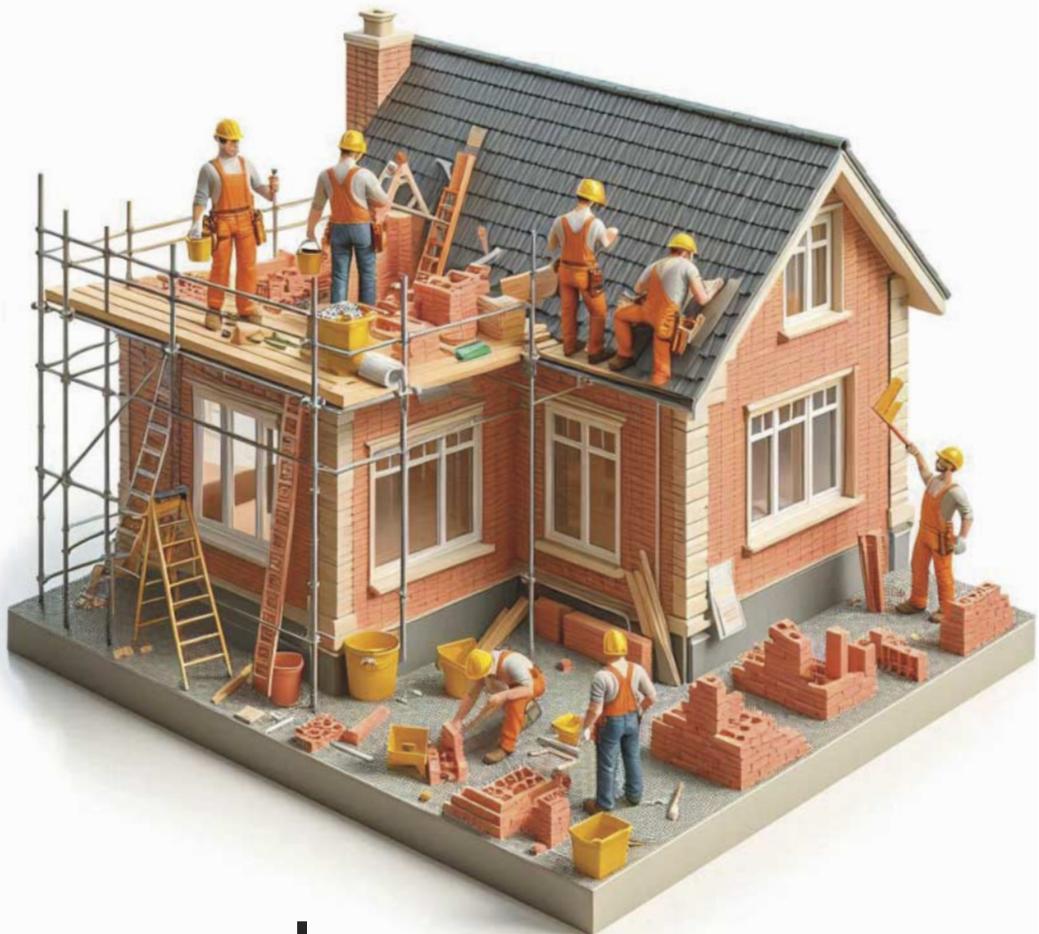
reach their daily caps early, meaning there is often significant spare capacity in high-demand postcodes as the day, and the week, progresses. The flow of high-quality, ready-to-buy homeowners continues, but not every installer has the bandwidth to take them.

For bigger installers with established sales teams, that's a huge competitive advantage waiting to be taken. If you have the headcount, the structure, and the appetite, you can step into those high-demand postcodes and take on the excess volume that smaller competitors simply can't accommodate. It's an opportunity to keep your sales staff well fed, motivated, and consistently in front of homeowners who are ready

to buy. Through Leads 2 Trade, you can choose exactly where you want to work and take flexible volumes that match your sales capacity. Whether you want premium appointed leads with confirmed times and dates, hot-key telephone transfers, or standard double-qualified leads, the opportunity is there for installers prepared to scale. And with hundreds of leads available nationwide, the barrier to growth has never been lower.

As we approach our 20th year of trading in 2026, one thing remains crystal clear: there is more business out there. The installers who will grow fast are the ones who make sure their sales teams are never left waiting for the next opportunity."

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# armstrong industries announces 10% sales growth in 2025

[kommerling.co.uk](http://kommerling.co.uk)

Driven by KÖmmerling innovation and bespoke colour technology, Armstrong Industries, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of uPVC and aluminium windows and doors, is proud to announce a 10% increase in sales for 2025—a milestone driven by innovation, partnership, and a commitment to helping customers win more business in a competitive market.

This growth is closely tied to the company's continued investment in the KÖmmerling product range, including the chamfered, ovolو, and full flush casement and door systems. These profiles have allowed Armstrong's trade partners to elevate their product offerings, expand into new design sectors, and deliver the modern aesthetics homeowners increasingly demand.

The full flush casement system, in particular, has proven to be a stand-out success. Its clean sightlines and premium finish have given installers a high-value product with broad consumer appeal. Combined with the reliability and engineering excellence associated with KÖmmerling, Armstrong customers have been able to differentiate themselves from lower-spec competitors and secure additional market share throughout the year.

In addition to profile innovation, Armstrong Industries' in-house profile paint system has become



a decisive advantage for customers looking to offer something unique. Unlike standard foil options, Armstrong's paint technology allows installers to provide truly bespoke finishes—including contemporary matte tones, heritage shades, and custom architectural colours.

This capability has opened new opportunities for installers who want to position themselves at the premium end of the market. Homeowners increasingly seek individuality and distinctive kerb appeal; Armstrong's colour system has helped its trade partners meet those expectations with confidence. Many customers have reported winning jobs specifically because they could offer colours and finishes not available elsewhere. The combined

strength of KÖmmerling profiles and Armstrong's bespoke colour offering has directly contributed to the company's year-on-year growth. Installers who adopted the expanded range early in 2025 have seen noticeable uplifts in enquiry volumes, average order values, and conversion rates.

As Armstrong continues to invest in new machinery, streamlined manufacturing, and customer support, the business fully expects further growth into 2026. The company invites trade partners, installers, and industry professionals to experience the 10% difference themselves—by exploring the KÖmmerling range, visiting the Armstrong factory, and discovering the full potential of its colour technologies.

## 300% rise in eaton door sales

DoorCo reports the new Eaton door, the tallest and widest door standard composite door on the market, has seen a huge 300% jump in sales in the closing months of 2025.

Ben Aspinall, Commercial Director, tells us more: "Eaton is a classic example of DoorCo's focus on innovating for customers. When we designed Eaton, we wanted to make a product that added value to our offering for customers, opening up opportunities for helping to create grander and more accessible entrances, and we wanted to make it easy to procure and manufacture. An extension to the ORiGINAL range, Eaton is the largest door in our collection, with a standard size of 2100mm x 950mm. And from a one slab, it can create eight different designs."

"Our ambition is really starting to pay dividends now, seeing sales of Eaton increase 3-fold during 2025. 62% of our customers have added Eaton to their portfolio and it's proving popular in both the retail and commercial sectors."

"A hybrid of traditional and modern design, the Eaton slab incorporates the efficiency and performance of ORiGINAL but with a fresh, new and exclusive woodgrain finish. It's been carefully engineered to be versatile so stock holding can be simplified. The panel designs - twin verticals at one end and a single square moulding at the other - along with equal trimmability at both the top and bottom of the slab, means the slab can be rotated 180 degrees and used both ways in manufacturing to create some impressive designs based around 3 key styles: Eaton, Knightsbridge & Tatton. It's available in 9 standard colours (including Slate and Agate) or it can be painted to suit any project."

"For retail, Eaton is being pushed as a high-end entrance door, and some customers are using it to create grander entrances. Renovations and extensions, for example, favour modern architecture and Eaton fits perfectly with open-plan layouts, high ceilings, and minimalist facades. Or simply, homeowners are opting for bigger doors to help create a premium feel, which can enhance kerb appeal and property value. Eaton's uniqueness certainly delivers on both counts."

"In the commercial arena, Eaton is being recognised as an exclusive entrance door that offers both aesthetics from its incomparable design and practicality thanks to the



accessibility benefits and compliance with Part M. Developers are starting to bring Eaton into their designs via our commercial customers.

"It's perfect for a mixed development that incorporates various housing styles. Not only are the designs in Eaton exclusive for the larger, more expensive homes, but they complement some of our widely specified ORiGINAL designs. For example, Knightsbridge is the perfect counterpart to Carnoustie, offering the same classic elegance of the twin vertical design, but with advanced

features and detailing. Eaton is exclusive to DoorCo's ONE Supplier range, which incorporates foam-filled, solid core and fire rated entrance doors. As with our innovation, our supply designed around what our customers want and need and has been crafted over the last 18 years to keep customers and the market agile and responsive."

"Speak to your sales manager to find out more and get the Eaton product range into your offering to kick start 2026."



## how to avoid chinese whispers in the workplace

by wayne hunter, operations manager, emmegi (uk)

All the Emmegi engineers in the UK and Ireland attend the Voilap Academy at our HQ in Italy for regular top level training – to keep their skills up to date, advance their knowledge & skills & learn about new machines or features.

We recognise the importance and value of that to our business, and also to our customers' businesses, because this is team of engineers who visit their premises and train their machine operators. It's important that our engineers are operating at the highest level because when they share their expertise with fabricators, they aren't just ensuring that our machines operate safely and efficiently, they're providing a whole raft of other potential benefits as well.

Well trained operators make a massive contribution to product quality, output and reliability and, if it helps them to feel valued and rewarded as well, the result can even be a more stable workforce with lower recruitment costs. In my experience, as well as performing better, operators who have been comprehensively trained take greater responsibility for the machine and its output, and even have a heightened sense of loyalty and improved levels of engagement.

Of course, a saw or a CNC machine represents a significant outlay, so it makes good commercial sense to maximise that investment by ensuring that your operators have real knowledge and understanding to use the machine to its full capacity and capability.

Some customers might have the resources and expertise in-house to undertake training themselves, but most will not; and it is far better to come to the machinery supplier direct for that training rather than relying on Chinese whispers between your team to share what each of them know – not all of which might be entirely accurate. And Emmegi (UK) can provide training at any point in the life of one of our machines and it doesn't matter if the machine was bought new or on the second hand market.

You might be risking the safety of your team if they lack real understanding of the machine, but you're almost certainly compromising on your product quality

and even losing money on remakes and down time.

On CNC machines, one of the most common problems we see is collisions which come when the machine is out of tolerance; and this can weaken the components and eventually lead to failure. In fact, this is one of the key indicators of operator error that our service engineers see when they visit for a repair – but all too often that just comes down to a lack of training and knowledge.

Like every machinery supplier, Emmegi (UK)'s training starts with an emphasis on safety – safe areas of work and understanding the risks and hazards, as well as how to start up and stop the machine correctly and emergency stop and restart procedures. Then, we obviously cover basic machine controls, loading and unloading materials, onboard software functions, adjustments and settings between materials, feeds and speeds, installing new profiles, creating preparations, and changing tools and saw blades. We also cover necessary checks and procedures, cleaning protocols and basic maintenance using the toolkits we provide.

However, it's when you move beyond that basic level of training that you see the real benefits to fabricators from making sure that everyone who operates any of the machines in the factory understands exactly how to use them to their full capacity. Then they will know exactly how to apply the best method of operation for specific products and requirements. They will be able to troubleshoot effectively in case of an alarm, and they will be able to reduce unnecessary tooling costs by consistently applying the correct feeds and speeds.

The reality is that an untrained operator who makes the same mistake over and over again can end up costing the business a lot more than the training would have cost in the first place.

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# haffner celebrates 100 years of machinery excellence

[haffnerltd.com](http://haffnerltd.com)

1st January, 2026 marks the centenary of Haffner Germany, the manufacturer of PVC-U and aluminium fabrication technology. Dave Thomas, CEO and founder of Haffner Ltd, said: "Haffner machines have transformed the way windows and doors are manufactured, driving productivity, quality and efficiency for fabricators around the globe. Reaching 100 years is not only a celebration of our heritage, but a reminder of how our machinery continues to set the benchmark for the industry."

Founded in 1926 in Pforzheim, Germany, by Gotthold Haffner, the company began by producing precision woodworking hand machines. Over the decades, Haffner has evolved into one of the most influential names in the fenestration sector, known globally for its advanced CNC technology and fully automated fabrication lines.

Today, the company is perhaps best known for its SBA profile machining centres. The latest iteration, the SBA-4 PVC-U Profile Machining Centre, draws on decades of automated expertise and delivers an exceptional balance of cutting and machining performance for PVC-U profiles.

Haffner's impact on fabrication efficiency is also demonstrated by its welding technology. The SMR-4 Four Head Welder eliminates corner-weld



misalignment by automatically aligning corners and transoms, removing the need for a highly skilled operator and significantly reducing costly remakes. Alongside it, the SMR-5 Five Head Welding Machine allows a single operative to weld twice as many frames compared to a standard quad welder, transforming productivity and profitability on the shop floor. Haffner's KT Assembly Tables further enhance workflow by bringing multiple assembly processes together in a single, efficient workstation.

Haffner Ltd has been part of the Haffner story for more than 35 of the 100 years, and the company has always continued the track record of excellence set by its German counterparts. It has won two G Awards for Machinery Supplier of the Year and

secured two NFA Awards for Machinery Company of the Year. Dave said: "Our multiple awards reflect our commitment to delivering machinery, technical expertise and long-term partnerships that help fabricators scale with confidence."

Dave concluded: "As we celebrate this important milestone, we're not just reflecting on the past, we're looking firmly ahead. Haffner's legacy is built on precision machinery design, but its future is about enabling fabricators to compete and grow in an evolving market. Celebrating 100 years is a proud moment for us all and we're committed to ensuring the next century has just as much impact on the industry as the last."

## fmb survey shows small housebuilders have optimism despite challenges

It reveals encouraging signs of confidence among small builders alongside persistent challenges that continue to hinder the sector.

The survey of 169 housebuilders found that 73% anticipate robust buyer demand, 69% are planning to increase their workforce, and 68% believe the Government's planning reforms can help diversify the market and boost the number of small developers.

However, Brian Berry, Chief Executive of the FMB, highlighted ongoing concerns about the decline of small housebuilders, noting that their share of new homes has fallen dramatically from 40% in the 1980s to just 9% today.

"This decline is not just bad for local house builders, it is bad for consumer

choice, it is bad for the range of design being made available, and it is bad in terms of delivery," Berry said.

The survey also revealed significant barriers, with two-thirds of respondents reporting they are unable to pursue sites due to anticipated Section 106 costs, and over a third stating the process for obtaining planning permission is getting worse.

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government, announced that the Government has launched changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.

"We've simplified planning for sites under 9 homes. Such developments now benefit from faster decisions by expert planning officers with streamlined biodiversity net gain requirements," Baroness Taylor said.

She outlined additional measures including £48 million to support recruitment and training of planners, selling more of Homes England's land in small-only sales, and a £700 million extension to the Home Building Fund.

"We recognise the challenges you face," the Minister said. "Planning delays, regulatory burdens, a lack of suitable sites and access to finance you need to grow and invest, these have hindered SME builders to do what you do best."

In a notable show of cross-party consensus, Sir James Cleverly MP, Shadow Secretary of State for



Housing, Communities and Local Government, pledged Conservative support for ambitious reforms.

"The Government will have the support of the opposition benches if they are genuinely courageous in reducing the tax burden, reducing the regulatory burden, in making it easier for small local builders to get stuff done," Sir James said.

He emphasised the Conservative commitment to scrapping stamp duty to increase market churn.

"Small is beautiful. And whenever you see a market that only has half a

dozen players, that is not a properly functioning market," he added.

The Government has committed to building 1.5 million new homes by the end of this parliamentary term, with both ministers and shadow ministers emphasising the vital role small and medium-sized building companies must play in achieving this target.

"Your work shows the very real constraints SMEs face, and underscores where our reforms must go further," Baroness Taylor said. "We will keep pushing to ensure you are able to unleash your full potential."



## energy-efficient glazing edge for heritage windows

[swissspacer.com](http://swissspacer.com)

**Lavater school complex in Zurich combines energy-efficient refurbishment, architectural heritage and new usage concepts**

Through the refurbishment and extension of the Lavater school complex, an important testimony to Zurich's school architecture has been preserved and updated for future generations. The building ensemble from 1896/97, designed by city architect Gustav Gull in the style of the Swiss National Museum in Zurich, is an excellent example of the sensitive interplay between historic fabric and modern technology. Particular attention was paid to the refurbishment of the historic windows, which were carefully restored in line with heritage requirements by Holzmanufaktur SWISS AG, partner company of Holzmanufaktur Rottweil, specialists in historic timber window restoration – now featuring modern insulating glazing and the high-performance warm edge spacer bar Swissspacer Ultimate in the glazing edge.

The heritage-listed Lavater school complex in Zurich is a historical witness to the change in school building design at the end of the 19th century. In close consultation with the city's monument preservation authorities, the building complex underwent a careful transformation into a modern all-day school and was structurally and energetically refurbished.

In addition to improving the energy efficiency of the building envelope, the renovation concept by the Zurich-based architecture office neff neumann architekten pursued the functional and design-

oriented further development of the complex. The school was designed for contemporary day school operations with twelve secondary classes. The former single sports hall was transformed into the "Forum Lavater" – a light-filled dining and multipurpose building – while beneath the schoolyard a new underground double sports hall was constructed, which is also available for club sports outside school hours.

In the historic main building, accessibility, room acoustics and lighting were specifically improved without abandoning the original room structure. The restoration of the architectural qualities from the time of construction played a central role in this. The spatial structure of the classrooms was retained in principle. However, the central zone, which dominates the space with access and sanitary facilities, was given a different design – for example, with ceramic wall surfaces reminiscent of historical elements. Thanks to floor-to-ceiling glazing with wooden frames, the corridor zones and group rooms now receive plenty of light and allow for flexible use – always in keeping with Gustav Gull's clear spatial logic.

The planning also took up the architectural structure of the existing building in the outdoor area. The playground is spatially enclosed by the two historic school buildings and a tree-lined perimeter wall. Three new concrete roofs of varying heights provide a restrained counterpoint to the striking arcade with the school entrance and the asymmetrically placed risalit. The design of the outdoor facilities follows an ecological model with heat-reducing measures, structures that promote biodiversity and an opening of the school grounds to the local community. The concept by neff neumann architekten was awarded first prize in the City of Zurich's selective planning competition in 2017 – a tribute to the architectural precision in dealing with the existing building and its further development.

The school buildings are now powered entirely by renewable sources: a photovoltaic system on the flat roof and a geothermal heat pump cover the entire energy requirement. To improve indoor air quality and

temperature, the historic ventilation system in the classrooms was reactivated. Ventilation is provided mechanically in the original ventilation ducts. The high energy efficiency is evident not only in the supply technology, but also in numerous structural details. In particular, the renovation of the windows in line with conservation guidelines is a prime example of the sensitive handling of historical substance and modern technology.

During the restoration of the historic sandstone façade, the original windows were carefully renovated and fitted with new insulating glazing. Automatically controlled fabric awnings provide heat protection in summer. The implementation of the window solutions is a prime example of how energy performance can be combined with historic preservation requirements. The original composite windows were largely retained in their original design, but were technically upgraded. While the historic interior glass could be preserved, modern insulating glazing with Planiclear and ECLAZ ONE coatings was used on the exterior. The high standards for careful installation in the historic building required complex logistics for the installation – including the use of a crane and special transport boxes for the upper windows.

The insulating glass unit achieves a  $U_g$  value of  $1.4 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$  – a balanced value from both a technical and economic point of view. In combination with the Swissspacer Ultimate in the glazing edge, this results in a particularly energy-efficient overall construction. "For a project like Lavater, which is subject to both heritage conservation and energy efficiency requirements, it was important for us to choose a spacer bar that could deliver both technological performance and design restraint. Swissspacer Ultimate impressed us with its excellent  $Psi$ -values, its matte, understated appearance and its discreet technical perforation," explains Dirk Obser, project manager at Holzmanufaktur Rottweil. Even the smallest component fits into an overall concept that combines monument protection, sustainability and everyday practicality in a remarkable way.

# doorco turns 18

door-co.com

DoorCo celebrated its 18th birthday in December, marking a poignant milestone in their journey of growth and innovation. What started as a simple distribution model supplying foam-filled doors, has grown to be the UK's leading supplier of composite door components. DoorCo has evolved over the last 18 years from a small team to a 200-strong workforce in the UK alone, with multiple product and people awards under their belts.

"Since opening our doors 18 years ago, our mission has been simple: to deliver innovation and unbeatable service to our customers", says DoorCo's MD Dan Sullivan. "Foam-filled doors still remain our best-seller with distribution also still a huge portion of what we do, but the business now stretches across 4 door ranges, a glazing cassette system and a flexible prep, paint and glazing service offering. Built on our values of People, Agility, Quality and Innovation, our laser-focused approach has allowed us to remain committed to what matters most to us - providing superior products to the fabricator market with an accompanying service that makes the process easy.

"We've been incredibly lucky to have been joined on our journey with a network of loyal customers. We wouldn't be where we are without the support of customers and suppliers who have been with us throughout our growth, so we'd like to take this opportunity to thank those customers and suppliers, old and new, for their support.

"From humble beginnings in a portacabin in Macclesfield to taking over the whole 65'000 sq ft of the building we only once occupied a small part of in



Macclesfield, and a new facility in Doncaster, it's certainly been a journey of growth and change for DoorCo.

"In December 2007, we were officially incorporated and entered the market with a container service offering 4 types of foam-filled composite door slabs. After a couple of successful years, we launched our UK-based distribution service and as the distribution business grew traction, we introduced our manufacturing service, which we now refer to as 'prepping'. And since then, we've added additional services like painting and glazing and grown to a business run by over 200 spanning across all functions.

"Our driving force throughout our growth has always been innovation. From our first 6/4 combi slab to the 3 different cores and unique glazing cassette system we offer, providing products that help our customers sell more doors is what defines us.

"As well as products, service innovation has also been key. In 2017, things got digital with the launch of a new online ordering system, and since then we have been able to add Just in Time and a next day delivery service to our offering.

"As any business develops, so does their brand. Our 2021 redevelopment of our branding drew a line in the sand for the business, as well as helping us launch new essential product lines. The execution of the rebrand won us our first G-Award for Best Promotional Campaign and made our intentions clear to the market: we're here to stay and we want to be the best.

"Along with all the highs of the last 18 years, there has also been our fair share of challenges and change to be weathered but thanks to our team, customers and suppliers, every hurdle is jumped and we're proud to be watching operations continue to strengthen and grow with every year that passes us.

"As we move forward into the next 18 years and beyond, we're excited by the team we have on board, the products we have on offer and feel empowered by our knowledge of the years we now have under our belt. DoorCo is still a family business, with Jayne and I firmly at the helm, but we've built a team around us that are experts in their fields, understand our market, business and customers to help us build a business that has same goal as it did 18 years ago: to provide high quality composite door components to the UK fabricator market."

## trust is the installer's strongest sales tool

**Ultion reveals why brand reputation is replacing technical detail as the key driver of premium hardware sales**

For years, security sales have revolved around specification. Star ratings, accreditations and test results gave installers the evidence they needed to justify an upgrade. That still matters. But it's no longer what closes the sale.

**Homeowners buy belief before they buy specification**

Most homeowners do not want a deep technical breakdown. They want to feel confident that the product on their door is proven, reliable and widely trusted.

Independent reviews now do the heavy lifting. A visible Trustpilot score instantly builds reassurance in a way spec sheets never could. It shows real people having real experiences, and that carries weight at the decision point. "Trust now closes the sale before the specification ever really enters the conversation," says Alex Dutton, Sales Director at Brisant Secure. "When a customer already believes in the brand, installers spend less time defending their recommendation and more time winning the job."

Homeowners are researching earlier than ever. By the time they request a quote, many have already read reviews, seen the brand online and formed a preference. That changes the dynamic on site. The installer is no longer selling from scratch, they're

confirming what the homeowner has already started to believe. That makes the entire process faster, simpler and more likely to close at a premium price point.

Installers consistently report that recognised brands remove resistance. When a homeowner already knows the brand, the sale becomes easier. The customer trusts the recommendation because they trust the name behind it. This matters in an industry that has never been more competitive. Homeowners are presented with dozens of security claims and conflicting messages. The one thing they understand instinctively is reputation. They want the brand they've heard of, the one their neighbours have mentioned, the one they've seen reviewed online.

That recognition shortens the sales process and increases acceptance of premium hardware. It removes friction at the point of decision, a critical advantage for installers working in a price-sensitive market. A strong public reputation is not just a marketing benefit. It has practical value on every job. It reduces the need for long technical explanations, allowing installers to focus on fitting rather than selling. And once the job is complete, trusted products generate fewer complaints and fewer return visits, which protects the installer's own reputation as well as their diary.

None of this replaces the need for compliance. PAS 24, Secured by Design and insurance requirements still underpin the product choice. But specification is now the minimum standard, not the main selling point.

"Specification gets you approved," says Alex. "Trust gets you chosen."

This shift is one reason Ultion is increasingly being requested by name. Its 4.7-star Trustpilot rating, built from more than 11,000 reviews, has created a level of homeowner recognition that directly supports installers at the point of sale. "When a homeowner



already knows Ultion, the conversation is easier from the first minute," says Alex. "The installer starts with instant credibility." As a Brisant Secure brand, Ultion combines that trust with high technical performance. Brisant Secure is now part of Allegion, bringing additional scale and expertise behind the Ultion range. Its ALPS cylinder holds Sold Secure Diamond accreditation and has been tested to over 750,000 cycles. But it is the public confidence around the brand that increasingly drives the final buying decision.

The race to the bottom usually starts when the customer doesn't understand the value. If they can't see the difference between brands, they fall back on price. Trust changes that dynamic.

A brand backed by strong public confidence allows installers to stand their ground on quality. It supports premium pricing, protects margin and positions the installer as a professional who specifies proven, trusted hardware, not just the cheapest option.

Homeowners are far more comfortable paying for what they believe is the best. A recognised brand helps reinforce that belief.

Trust is now one of the most powerful tools an installer can take into a sales conversation. It reduces objections, speeds up decisions and strengthens the installer's position from the first quote to the final handover.

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# creating a content plan

Copywriter to the glazing industry, Helen Savage, discusses why planning is so important when it comes to content creation and explains step by step how to create a plan you will stick to.

People now use the word 'content' to mean a lot of different things. Some use it to describe social media messages or videos specifically, others use it to cover any online material, while others still incorporate its traditional meaning covering any words or pictures featured in print and/or online. If there is a shared understanding among all stakeholders as to what the term 'content' covers, it doesn't really matter which definition is used. And I would argue creating a plan for all types of content is useful. The key is to keep it simple.

## First things first, what shall I write about?

Whether you are planning for your social media channels, blog posts, or articles in a trade magazine, a good first step, is to make a list of topics you want to talk about. Some ideas that you could use, or that may inspire you, include: advice for your audience, benefits of services or products you offer, a new launch, step by step guides related to your field, answers to questions you have been asked, and an insight into the more personal side of your business such as introducing team members or 'behind the scenes' entries.

## Timing is everything

Once you have your list of topics, there are lots of online tools you could use to plan out your content including Trello, Monday.com, or Asana, but if you're just starting out you can keep it simple to begin with and draw up a table or excel spreadsheet with months or weeks listed and then use your bank of topics to populate your timeline. Some posts may be time relevant – for example if they relate to an event, product launch, or season – while others can be posted anytime. It can be helpful to keep this plan separate from anything else, so it is easy to read at a glance.

## A well-balanced plan

When you have your plan, double check it to make sure it is well-balanced. You want to make sure that you don't have three behind-the-scenes posts back-to-back, or you haven't put all your more technical articles upfront and left all the softer issues for later.

## Stay flexible

Once you have created your Content Plan, be prepared for things to change and allow your plan to be flexible. Things change, new things come up, product launches get delayed, your customers ask new questions that you think would be useful to share sooner rather than later. Whatever changes arise, try and keep your plan up to date.

Planning out your content in one place is incredibly useful because it allows you to immediately see topics you have covered, topics you have yet to cover and gaps in the content you're providing. It also ensures you create copy consistently for maximum results.

 **BlogWrite**  
Helen Savage  
Director



## pvc vs aluminium

[astrawindows.co.uk](http://astrawindows.co.uk) 01204 793333

Installers are often presented with an either-or proposition: PVC or aluminium. However, for most trade professionals working on the ground, the reality is far less binary. Instead, it's about practicalities: what's right for the job, what fits the budget, what the client expects, and, crucially, what makes the install as smooth and efficient as possible.

A good trade supplier doesn't just offer both materials, they understand how and where each one performs best, and how to make that performance easily accessible for the installer. This is something Astra Windows, a Greater Manchester-based fabricator with over three decades of experience, has built its reputation on.

Established in 1989, Astra Windows has long supported UK installers with a dual-material offering: premium aluminium and reliable PVCu, both manufactured in-house. But what defines Astra isn't just its product range. It is also the company's ability to understand how different projects demand different solutions, and how to support trade professionals across the full spectrum. "Installers aren't asking whether aluminium or PVC is 'better' in theory," says David Jackson, Managing Director. "They're asking what's going to install easily, perform well, and keep their customers happy in the long term. That's what we focus on, making sure every product we supply does that job properly."

Although we could debate which material is theoretically superior all day, real installers don't work in theoretical conditions. They work on tight schedules, with real customers, real deadlines, and reputations on the line. Astra Window's role is to make sure whatever material is chosen, it installs smoothly, performs reliably, and helps the installer move on to the next job with confidence.

In recent years, aluminium has moved from niche to necessity. Homeowners and architects are demanding slimmer sightlines, larger glazing areas, and premium finishes, the kind that PVC often struggles to deliver. Installers are recognising aluminium not just for its looks, but for its dimensional stability, long-term durability, and growing ease of use. Systems like Astra's ALUK windows,

sliders and commercial entrance doors, ALUNA bifolds, Jack Aluminium internal doors and screens, and Signature entrance doors are designed around the realities of trade work with batch consistency, installer-friendly detailing, and quick-fit componentry built in. These are essential features for tradespeople trying to complete more jobs with fewer headaches, and sufficiently tight margins.

Furthermore, in commercial settings, aluminium is fast becoming the only viable option. This is another area where fabricators and suppliers have had to up their levels, adapting to the latest expectations. Astra Windows also provide curtain walling and shopfront solutions, with a strong focus on safety features like integrated finger trap protection and PAS24 system compliance, to give installers the confidence to tackle higher-spec jobs with less risk of post-fit issues.

That said, Astra Windows isn't pushing an either-or agenda. Its in-house PVCu window and door systems remain a core part of its offer, and for good reason. In applications where simplicity, budget, or legacy aesthetics dictate the spec, PVC still delivers. For many of Astra's trade customers, the value lies not in being forced to choose one material over another, but in having access to both, supported by a supplier who understands how to make each one work to their advantage.

Astra backs its product range with services that matter to fitters: quotes turned around in 24 hours, nationwide delivery direct to site, and a team that prioritises clear, straightforward communication. It's this focus on practicality, not just product, that has helped the company build long-term relationships with many installers across the UK, as it aims to position itself as a complete partner, where installers can get everything they need.

# fabframes expands stellar production following bifold success

[stellaraluminium.co.uk](http://stellaraluminium.co.uk)

Fabframes has brought forward the next phase of its aluminium strategy after experiencing exceptional trade demand for its Stellar Slimline Bifold Doors. Originally focused on bifold manufacture, the Devon-based fabricator is now moving into full production of the complete Stellar Aluminium window and door range.

The decision has been driven by ongoing installer feedback praising the bifold door for its slimline aesthetics and installation efficiency, with many of Fabframes customers calling it 'the best bifold they have ever fitted'.

Mike Taylor, Managing Director at Fabframes, said: "We always listen closely to our customers and the response to Stellar bifolds has been superb. Installers appreciate the ease of installation and the quality of the finished result. When your customers are that enthusiastic about a product, you know you're onto the right thing."

To support the expansion into inhouse aluminium fabrication, Fabframes has continued its investment in additional manufacturing space and equipment dedicated to aluminium production, ensuring capacity is in place to meet growing order volumes.



Mike added: "Our customers rely on us for quality, reliability and service they can trust. Stellar enables us to deliver all of that while maintaining the fast turnarounds the market expects. Bringing the full Stellar range into production now makes perfect commercial sense."

Jon Foulds, Key Account Manager at Stellar Aluminium, said: "Fabframes only began fabricating Stellar in August 2025 and their progress has been exceptional. The speed at which they have expanded to the full system shows just how well the products are performing for them and their customers. We're proud to be supporting their growth and to see

Stellar playing such a key role in it." Fabframes will now manufacture the entire Stellar Aluminium portfolio, including windows, residential doors, sliding doors, heritage windows and its popular bifold system, ensuring installers across the South-West have faster access to a complete suite of premium aluminium products.

This development further highlights the growing market appeal of the multi-award-winning Stellar Aluminium system, as more fabricators look for aluminium solutions that deliver efficiency in the factory and on site while offering a strong competitive advantage.

## the uk's most in-demand composite door trends and what installers can expect in 2026

[info@compdoor.co.uk](mailto:info@compdoor.co.uk)

New sales analysis from Comp Door has revealed the composite door styles, colours and components that continue to shape installer demand across the UK, with data showing that while new finishes are gaining ground, reliability and timeless design still dominate the market.

Reviewing nationwide order volumes over the last two years, Comp Door's figures highlight a clear preference for glazed traditional door styles, neutral colour palettes and proven component choices, with only gradual shifts emerging as installers respond to evolving homeowner tastes.

Glazed traditional door designs continue to lead the way, with styles such as Whitmore Glazed, Somerset and Buxton consistently topping order volumes. These door styles remain popular across both period and modern properties, reinforcing the ongoing demand for light-enhancing designs that deliver kerb appeal without feeling overly contemporary.

"What we see year after year is that homeowners still want doors that feel established and familiar,"

explains Richard Diliberto, Sales Director at Comp Door, "Glazed traditional styles tick a lot of boxes for installers because they suit such a wide range of properties and buyer profiles."

Colour choice remains equally consistent. "Grey isn't going anywhere in 2026," Richard adds, "But we are seeing more confidence around softer neutrals. Installers who offer a broader grey and off-white palette are giving homeowners more choice without increasing complexity."

Glazing design also plays a key role in purchase decisions, with decorative options still far outperforming minimalist styles. Victorian Border, Classic and Kensington glazing designs remain the most popular choices, reflecting a continued preference for privacy, character and visual interest at the front of the home.

While standard cassettes continue to account for the majority of orders, this remains closely linked to homeowner familiarity and its availability across the full door range. Within the door styles where ultimate cassettes are offered, they are typically specified on projects where a more premium finish or enhanced detailing is required, rather than as a direct replacement for standard options.

While standard door skins continue to account for the majority of overall volumes, Comp Door's latest figures show that the demand for SleekSkin is steeply and steadily growing, one order in every five placed has been a request for their unique SleekSkin door finish.

"What we're seeing is a growing appetite for cleaner, more contemporary finishes, even on traditionally styled doors," says Richard, "SleekSkin gives installers the ability to offer that smoother, more refined look without moving away from the door designs homeowners already know and trust. It's an easy way to modernise the final appearance while keeping the core style familiar."



Looking ahead to 2026, Comp Door expects continuity rather than disruption. Glazed traditional doors, grey-led colour palettes and familiar hardware choices are all set to remain installer staples, while premium finishes such as SleekSkin and darker hardware tones are predicted to continue their gradual rise.

"The big takeaway for installers is that trends are evolving, not flipping overnight," Richard concludes, "Grey will likely remain dominant, traditional glazed doors will continue to lead volumes, and we'll see incremental growth in premium finishes rather than sudden change."

# four decades of growth

[secondaryglazingmaster.com](http://secondaryglazingmaster.com)  
[fletcherfabrikations.uk](http://fletcherfabrikations.uk)

Two of the UK's most established family-run glazing specialists—Secondary Glazing Master and its sister company, Fletcher Fabrications—are celebrating four decades of growth, product diversification, and industry leadership.

Founded together in 1985 by Andrew and Gerda Fletcher, the two companies began as a small family enterprise focusing on secondary glazing for both retail and trade customers. Today, they stand as trusted names nationwide, known for their commitment to craftsmanship, a personal approach, and long-lasting results.

In 1994, their son Gary Fletcher joined the business straight from school, later taking the helm alongside his wife, Zuzana—expanding operations, modernising processes, and introducing new product lines such as bi-folding and patio doors. Since returning from the Covid period, this strategic development has fuelled notable growth, with Fletcher Fabrications rising from a turnover of around £400,000 to over £1 million annually.

Despite this expansion, the companies' values remain firmly rooted in family principles.

**"Our focus has always been on providing honest advice, long-lasting solutions, and the level of service you can only get from a family-run business," says Managing Director Gary Fletcher.**

Secondary Glazing Master specialises in high-quality secondary glazing solutions for homes and commercial properties across the UK. Their systems are designed to deliver warmer, quieter, and more secure environments without the disruption or cost of full window replacement. The company is particularly renowned for its sensitive work on listed and heritage buildings, where discreet, efficient solutions are essential.



Kevin Goddard, Factory Manager & Gary Fletcher, MD

Fletcher Fabrications expands the group's offering with a comprehensive manufacturing and installation service, including: Aluminium Patio doors, bi-folds, windows and UPVC windows.

Together, the two brands offer a complete portfolio for homeowners, landlords, and businesses seeking reliable, high-performance glazing and door solutions.

Across both companies, customer satisfaction remains central—from initial consultation to final installation. Transparent pricing, tailored recommendations, and consistent communication underpin every project, ensuring a smooth process

and dependable results.

"As we continue to grow, staying true to the values that built this business is our priority," Fletcher adds. "We take pride in being a family company our customers can trust."

With nearly four decades of experience, Secondary Glazing Master and Fletcher Fabrications continue to strengthen their presence within the glazing and home-improvement sectors. Their blend of tradition, innovation, and personal service positions them for steady, sustainable growth in the years ahead.

## frank bruno announced as guest speaker for ggf members day 2026

The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF) has announced that British boxing legend and mental health advocate Frank Bruno MBE will be the headline guest speaker at GGF Members Day 2026, taking place on Thursday 12th March.

Returning for another year of connection, celebration, and industry insight, this year's Members' Day puts GGF members firmly in the spotlight recognising the achievements, progress, and collaboration that continue to drive the sector forward.

Hosted at the iconic Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, the event will bring the industry together for an afternoon packed with networking opportunities, inspiring sessions, and exclusive behind-the-scenes tours. Members can expect a lively mix of speakers

and panel discussions designed to spark ideas and set businesses up for a strong start to 2026. Additional speakers and programme details will be announced over the coming weeks.

The highlight of the day will be a keynote from Frank Bruno, one of Britain's most recognisable sporting figures. Known for his exceptional boxing career, world-class determination, and powerful advocacy work around mental health, Frank will share stories from the ring, reflections on resilience, and practical insights into maintaining mental wellbeing in high-pressure environments.

As the industry prepares for another year of change and opportunity, Frank's message of focus, discipline, and courage is set to resonate strongly with attendees.

The celebrations continue into the evening, with a live band, dancing, and NFL-style stadium food rounding off a perfect blend of work and play.

"We're thrilled to welcome Frank Bruno to Members Day 2026," said Lauren Mawford, GGF Head of Commercial and Operations. "His incredible journey, combined with his dedication to mental health awareness, will give our members a truly memorable and uplifting experience."

"This year's event is all about coming together as a community and setting the tone for a positive, productive year ahead."





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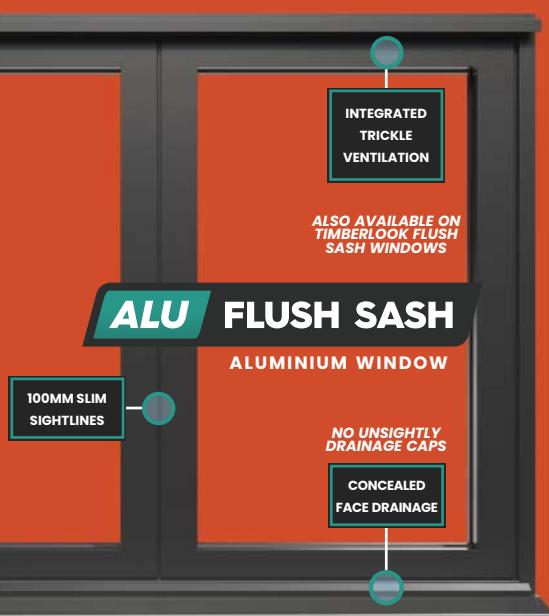


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