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The latest company news and product launches from across the flooring industry.

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Hello and welcome to the February issue of Tomorrow's Contract Floors.

From subfloor preparation to standout surface solutions, this issue explores how getting the fundamentals right underpins success in every project.

We begin with a focus on screeds and subfloor preparation, where attention to detail is critical. Jason Tatton, technical service manager at F. Ball and Co. Ltd., explains why identifying and addressing imperfections early is essential, offering practical guidance on selecting the right repair and finishing compounds. Meanwhile, Palace Chemicals examines how its fibre-enhanced screed solutions are helping to raise industry standards, delivering improved strength, flexibility and long-term durability in demanding commercial environments.

Sports flooring takes centre stage next, highlighting spaces where performance meets visual impact. Havwoods showcases its collaboration with SMASH by THG Studios on a tech-powered padel facility designed for immersive brand storytelling and high-impact digital content creation. Complementing this, Mapei outlines how its comprehensive range of adhesives, surfaces and coatings provides a fully integrated technical solution tailored to the needs of the sports sector.

Our modular flooring section turns to smarter installation strategies and purposeful design. Forbo reveals how its Tessera Contour and Tessera Teviot carpet tiles have been installed adhesive free to support a sustainable office refurbishment at Lancashire Business Park, reducing waste and promoting circularity. Amtico's Louisa Eyles then explores how LVT flooring can be used to define zones and improve wayfinding within public and commercial spaces.

Finally, our residential focus looks at risk reduction and accuracy at tender stage, with Jason Spangler of Wagner Meters explaining how concrete moisture testing can help contractors quote with confidence and secure the right jobs.

I hope you enjoy the issue.



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ARDEX UK AND BAL ACHIEVE GOLD STATUS FOR CO2 REDUCTIONS

ARDEX UK and Building Adhesives Ltd – part of the ARDEX Group UK – have announced they have both achieved Gold Certification for five years of continuous CO2 reduction and have retained their ISO 14064-1 certifications for Green House Gas reductions.

Both companies have retained their certification following successful external audits and peer reviews.

The certifications, issued by Achilles' Carbon Reduce (powered by Toitu) scheme and verified to ISO 14064-1:2018 standards, recognise the ongoing commitment of both organisations to measuring, managing, and actively reducing their carbon emissions.

Both businesses continue to make significant progress toward delivering the ARDEX Group's Building Tomorrow sustainability strategy and remain firmly on track to achieve carbon neutrality across Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2030.

Both BAL and ARDEX have demonstrated significant emission reductions over a rolling five-year reporting period.

BAL has delivered a 16% reduction in Category 1 & 2 greenhouse gas emissions, meanwhile ARDEX UK has achieved an even greater reduction of 21% across the same categories.

These reductions highlight the effectiveness of the companies' Carbon Neutral Roadmap initiatives, including ongoing investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy, carbon-conscious procurement, active emissions monitoring, and improved operational practices across UK facilities.

Paul Vickers, UK Procurement Manager & Member of the ARDEX Group Sustainability Corporate Unit, said: "Achieving Gold Certification for five consecutive years of CO2 reductions is a testament to the commitment and collaboration of our teams across the UK. Both ARDEX UK and BAL have made sustainability a core

priority – integrating carbon reduction into daily decision-making, long-term capital planning, and our wider organisational culture.

"We are delighted to see such strong, measurable progress and remain fully focused on delivering our 2030 commitment to carbon neutrality for Scope 1 and 2 emissions. This milestone reinforces that we are on the right path, and we will continue to build on these achievements with transparency, innovation, and responsibility."

<https://ardex.co.uk>
www.bal-adhesives.com



F. BALL APPOINTS NEW TECHNICAL SERVICE MANAGER

F. Ball and Co. Ltd. has announced the promotion of Jason Tatton to the role of technical service manager.

He succeeds Stephen Boulton, who retired at the end of last year after a 40-year career with the company.

Jason will now lead the company's industry-leading Technical Service Department, which provides expert advice on how to get the most out of F. Ball's subfloor preparation products and adhesives.

Jason brings a wealth of knowledge to the position gained through nearly 25 years in the flooring industry. He joined F. Ball in 2018 as a Technical Service Officer, having previously managed his family's flooring business, and has since provided expert advice to flooring professionals on best practice in subfloor preparation and floorcovering installation. He also assists F. Ball's regional and global Technical

Representatives in producing reports advising on the best course of action for specific flooring projects.

His expertise has seen him regularly advise on technical aspects of flooring installation in features for flooring industry publications.

Commenting on his appointment, Jason said: "Having been a flooring contractor and relied on the F. Ball technical support, as well as being a Technical Service Officer, I appreciate how valuable this service is to professionals on the job. I've always admired the F. Ball ethos, so I'm delighted to be in a position to help take this forward."

F. Ball Technical Director Neil Sanders added: "F. Ball's technical support is one of the strengths that sets us apart in the flooring industry, and the Technical Service Department is a cornerstone of this. Jason's experience makes him the ideal person to ensure that this continues to be a key feature of the F. Ball offering."

When he is not leading the technical team, Jason enjoys spending time with his wife Kristy and their four children. His hobbies include walking, travelling, and sport, in particular football.

www.f-ball.co.uk



BEAUFLORED AWARDED ECOVADIS GOLD FOR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

The cushion vinyl division of Beaulieu International Group has been awarded the EcoVadis Gold medal, recognising its strong performance in sustainability, ethics and responsible business practices. With an overall score of 80/100, Beauflor ranks among the top 5% of companies worldwide assessed by EcoVadis and the top 2% within the manufacture of plastics products industry.

“Our EcoVadis Gold rating reflects excellence across all four pillars: Environment, Labour & Human Rights, Ethics and Sustainable Procurement.”, said Nele Tack, general manager at Beauflor. “It confirms our commitment to continue making meaningful progress in a responsible and transparent way.”

EcoVadis is one of the world's leading sustainability assessment platforms in global supply chains, evaluating companies

on 21 environmental, social and ethical criteria. A Gold rating confirms that a company's policies, actions and results meet high international ESG standards.

STRONG RESULTS ACROSS ALL ESG DIMENSIONS

Beauflor achieved high scores across all four EcoVadis assessment areas:

- Environment: 81/100
- Labour & Human Rights: 79/100
- Ethics: 84/100
- Sustainable Procurement: 73/100

Within its industry, Beauflor's performance stands out even further, ranking top 2% overall, top 4% for Environment, top 3% for Labor & Human Rights and Sustainable Procurement, and top 1% for Ethics.

These results demonstrate a balanced and consistently high sustainability performance, covering not only environmental impact but also responsible business conduct and supply chain engagement.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

For Beauflor, sustainability goes beyond environmental considerations alone. It encompasses ethical behaviour, respect for people and transparent collaboration with partners across the value chain. The EcoVadis Gold rating reflects years of continuous improvement and cross-functional collaboration throughout the organisation.

Dorine Degryse, sustainability coordinator at Beauflor, said: “Earning EcoVadis Gold is more than a medal, it's a statement. It shows that when we commit to sustainability with purpose and passion, we can lead by example and inspire change across our value chain.”

The EcoVadis Gold medal is valid until January 2027 and will serve as a benchmark for Beauflor's ongoing sustainability ambitions.

www.beauflor.com



BEAUFLOL LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

Beauflor has launched a new website, www.beauflor.com, which makes it easy to find the right cushion vinyl floor within just a few clicks. Whether a homeowner decorating their home or a professional looking for a quality solution for their next project, the website makes everyone feel at home. A tailored user journey makes it faster and easier than ever to explore collections and find out everything you need to be ready to go vinyl.

For homeowners, this means ranges like Crown and Elite are all searchable by new releases, room, colour, design style and more. Beauflor has also made it easier to experience how its floors feel in homes with an improved room visualiser tool. Choosing from a gallery of pre-selected rooms or uploading a picture of their own, homeowners can let their imagination run wild, trying different styles and seeing how the creativity of Beauflor lifts any room out of the ordinary.

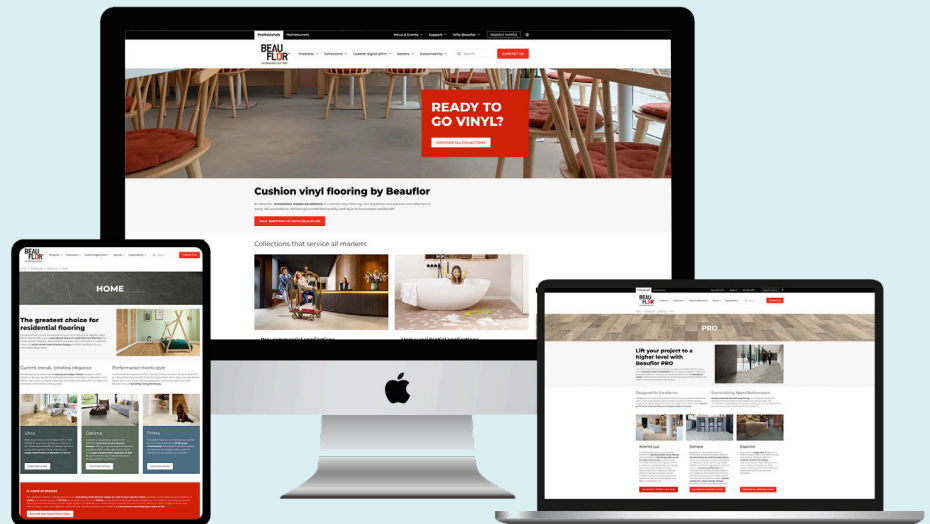
Meanwhile, professionals can select from Pro for commercial applications and Home for residential applications, finding out everything they need safe in the knowledge that their chosen floors are right for the task ahead. The new website also explores

the Create custom programme, opening the possibilities of custom digitally printed cushion vinyl. A page for Trade Fairs and Events ensures professionals can find out where to meet the Beauflor team at exhibitions across the world, and Latest News keeps them up to date with all the developments that matter.

For professionals keen to explore the impact cushion vinyl can have in improving social housing, senior living, public spaces

and retail, the website's sector pages take a dive into some of the key challenges of delivering a high-quality flooring solution and how Beauflor can help to overcome them. You can also see how Beauflor is driving to zero direct CO2 emissions by 2030 through its SBTi validated targets and changing the materials in its products with the pioneering bio-circular attributed PVC of its Twilight collection.

www.beauflor.com



A NATURAL WAY TO A BEAUTIFUL HOME WITH CAUSEWAY CARPETS

Causeway Carpets has refreshed its Nature Core and Nature Earth styles for the new season, introducing new colours to these beautifully crafted tufted loop pile carpets.

Featuring in the Natura Collection of natural fibre qualities by Causeway Carpets, Nature Core and Nature Earth are beautifully crafted tufted loop pile carpets made with 100% British Wool. Nature Core features a classic level loop pile in a chunky four-ply yarn that gives a distinct rustic charm, while Nature Earth's ribbed texture in the same four-ply yarn captures the handcrafted aesthetic of traditional weaving.

For the 2026 season, both carpets now come in five new colours, joining three existing best-selling shades. Adding a sense of richness to the natural flecked tones of both styles, the refreshed palette ensures that the carpets can find a place in any home wanting a classic countryside style in neutral hues. It also means that Nature Core and Nature Earth can be

combined to add interest between rooms while delivering a beautifully coordinated, flowing look through the home.

Richard Moore, commercial director at Causeway Carpets, said: "Nature Core and Nature Earth are impeccable quality wool carpets that are crafted to bring that much-loved rustic feel to British homes. Made with exquisite attention to detail, they bring unmistakable quality in a British Wool carpet that is suited to use throughout the home. Adding new natural colours for this season ensures that Nature Core and Nature Earth are perfectly in-tune with the interior tastes of today and into the future."

Rated for heavy domestic use, Nature Core and Nature Earth are hardwearing enough for family homes, making the most of wool's natural resilience for a long-lasting investment that will reward homeowners for years to come. Both styles are available on Causeway Carpets' new Compact Display Unit and Multi Display Unit.

For further information, call: 01388 737622 or email: sales@causewaycarpets.com.

www.causewaycarpets.com



CONTRACTORS CUT WASTE COSTS BY GOING GREEN

Flooring professionals are not just saving the Earth, but also saving money by using the F. Ball Recycling Scheme, with contractors cutting waste disposal costs by thousands.

The initiative, first introduced in 2019, provides commercial waste bins at select distributors around the country where empty recyclable F. Ball buckets and bottles can be disposed of for recycling, for free.

Since January last year alone, contractors Fineweave Carpets in Reading has returned over 1,300kg of plastic bottles using the service.

Lee Withers, director of Fineweave Carpets, said: "It's a win-win for us. We pride ourselves on doing what we can for the environment, and the F. Ball Recycling Scheme gives us another opportunity to do this whilst also cutting our costs."

Wholesaler Nutlands Carpets, which has branches in Poole and Chandlers Ford, has sent over 1,100kg of plastic buckets and bottles for recycling since the beginning of 2024.

James Smith, managing director of Nutlands Carpets, highlighted the benefits: "Customer convenience drives us, and offering this service saves contractors significant time and the expense of trips to commercial waste centres. As a result, we know that some choose to buy F. Ball products from us rather than other wholesalers.

"As a family-run distributor, we take great pride in doing our part to reduce the environmental impact of our operations, including being a part of innovative recycling schemes like this."

Another flooring wholesaler, John Palmer Carpets Ltd, has returned 480kg of plastic via the recycling scheme.

All F. Ball plastic buckets and the company's five- and 20-litre plastic bottles used for liquids, primers and tackifiers can be recycled via the scheme, with much of the packaging itself manufactured from recycled materials.

The scheme has been steadily expanded in response to a positive reception from flooring contractors, and there are now more than 40 recycling points at wholesaler partners across the UK.

Commenting on the figures, F. Ball sales director Karl Brannigan said: "With costs continuing to rise, finding ways to save money without compromising on installation quality has never been more important, nor has addressing our environmental impact. The F. Ball Recycling Scheme provides an effortless way to do both. We're delighted by some of the numbers around amounts recycled and savings by those benefitting from the scheme, and we urge more to get involved."

More information about the F. Ball Recycling Scheme, including participating wholesalers, is available on the company's website.

www.f-ball.co.uk



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IVC COMMERCIAL BRINGS VALUE AND LONGEVITY TO SOCIAL HOUSING FLOORING

With the Zenura collection of sheet vinyl, IVC Commercial can respond to the need for cost-effective floors that enhance the lives of people living in social housing.

With growing focus on social housing providing a good standard of accommodation for tenants, providers are considering flooring outside of the regulatory requirement for its use in bathrooms and kitchens. The consensus is that providing suitable flooring in all areas of the home positively impacts the physical and mental wellbeing of tenants, but concerns still exist as to the cost, ongoing maintenance and refurbishment of floors.

IVC Commercial offers the solution to these challenges in the Zenura collection, designed to provide comfort, durability and easy maintenance to living areas in social housing while delivering excellent value for providers. The collection includes four performance levels; Zenura Style, Zenura Luxe, Zenura Ultimate and Zenura Elegance LVS.

Each collection features a range of wood plank, herringbone and stone effects to bring a choice of popular and warming homely designs that will appeal to tenants. Providers can simply choose the performance level that best meets

their needs, whether that's in cost or specification. Every floor in the Zenura collection achieves at least Class 23, ensuring that longevity of service is maintained. As Zenura Style, Luxe and Zenura Ultimate floors are textile backed, they are also ideal for refurbishment, allowing for fast, glue-free fitting over existing floors or subfloors without additional preparation. For high-wear communal areas, Zenura Elegance LVS offers a super compact backing and an 'LVT-on-a-roll' aesthetic, allowing premium design effect on a budget.

Jake Parks, national sales manager – commercial, said: "With the Zenura collection for living areas, we're giving flooring contractors and social housing providers access to a tailored collection that's been designed to cope with the rigours of long-term use in domestic and communal areas, while remaining excellent value. The collection is widely available, and we work directly with many housing providers and contractors to provide tailored specifications that meet their exact need."

www.ivc-floorsforhousing.co.uk



LEOLINE MAKES IT EASY FOR EVERYONE TO FIND THEIR DREAM FLOOR

The LeoLine website makes it easy to find a floor as unique as you are.

With the latest collections, free samples and a world of interior inspiration, www.leoline.co.uk is the perfect place to start a journey into flooring as unique as you are. So, whether homeowners are looking for dazzling tiles, calming wood or cool and chic concrete, they'll find a LeoLine cushion vinyl floor that makes unique style easy and affordable.

Every collection can be explored in glorious detail and with helpful filters that sort floors by colour, style or room type, even if homeowners aren't sure of their dream design, the website will help them decide. With up to three free samples delivered right to their door, they'll be able to make their final choice with confidence.

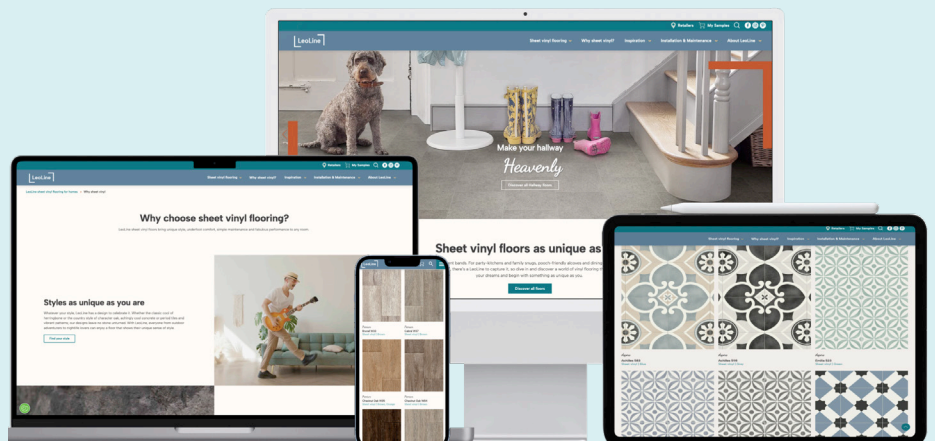
David Wray, UK sales manager, said: "The LeoLine website is an important part of our support to retailers, helping their customers to make the right purchasing decision. Our free sample service ensures

they can see the quality and style of any LeoLine floor, and with over 120 floors to choose from, they are sure to find their dream design with all the features they could wish for."

The website also features a regularly updated blog for the latest style advice and inspiration, as well as all the reasons why LeoLine cushion vinyl floors are perfect for

today's value-conscious home. LeoLine's easy installation and maintenance guides are also available for download. Comfortable, warm, quiet, water resistant, simple to install and easy to look after, LeoLine is the ideal alternative to costly and complex luxury vinyl.

leoline.co.uk



WONDERFULLY WATERPROOF

As we enter the new year, retailers are invited to embrace the power of Quick-Step, the only brand to offer waterproof laminate, wood and vinyl solutions that excel in every room of the home.

Quick-Step has been innovating laminate floors over three decades ago and its current generation of products beautifully showcase what 30-years of dedication to creating the best possible floors can bring.

In late 2025, Quick-Step updated its popular Impressive Collection, introducing eight new designs to 10 best-selling looks to bring an optimised collection of 18 natural wood designs that welcome nature indoors. For the first time, Impressive now also comes in six herringbone styles in an elegant and lifelike surface texture that's unique to these herringbone planks. Both standard planks and herringbone planks share the same legendary Quick-Step quality, waterproof construction, ultra-resistant top layer and fast and easy installation.

This Impressive update joins other laminate collections that share Quick-Step's unrivalled attention to detail. Among the standout ranges is Capture, a waterproof collection that brings laminate closer to nature than ever before. Quick-Step has recreated every detail in colour and structure in every knot, crack, grain and joint. Using new technology that allows it to achieve up to 20 times the depth of other laminate floors, Capture comes closer to real wood than you ever thought possible.

Once, the room your customers were renovating would dictate the floor they chose. Vinyl in bathrooms and kitchens, wood for luxury living and laminate for hallways and busy areas: practical necessity would shape your recommendation. But with the newest generation of wood, laminate and vinyl floors from Quick-Step it's the case no longer.

Featuring Quick-Step's Wood for Life technology, Cascada, Cala and Amato wood flooring collections are all waterproof and easy to live with. Wood for Life repels dirt and spills and avoids the build-up of dirt in the grain and joints that can cause blackness over time. With these ranges, homes can boast the natural beauty of wood with the practicality usually associated with synthetic floors.

WHEN USING A CONCRETE METER, USE ONE THAT'S

2X MORE ACCURATE

CONCRETE Moisture Meter C555 CE

For the 9 commonly used concrete mix designs we tested, the C555 came significantly closer to oven-dry results than other meters did.

Learn more: wmmeters.com/3NXghVf

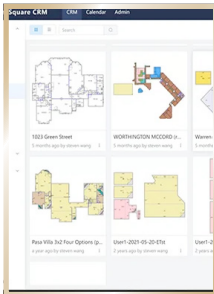
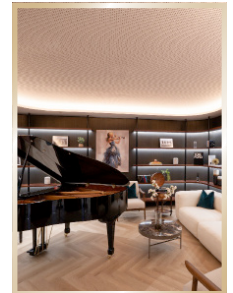
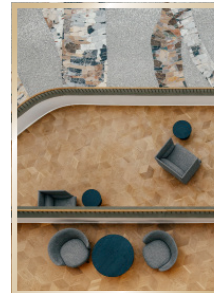
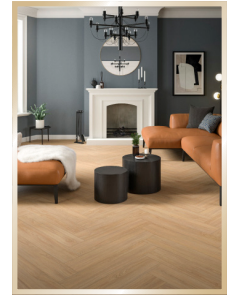
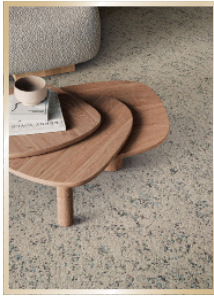
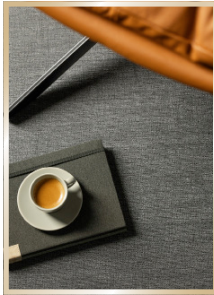
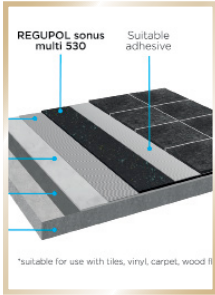
WAGNER METERS

wmmeters.com/3NXghVf

For rooms where the practicality of vinyl's scratch-resistant and easy-to-clean surface is a must, Completing the Quick-Step family of 100% waterproof floors is Alpha Vinyl, a premium quality rigid LVT option. With impressively authentic textures and perfect matt and gloss levels, Alpha Vinyl is the most natural looking rigid vinyl flooring available. What's more, thanks to Ciro herringbone and Illume stone collections sitting alongside its Bloss and Bloom planks, Alpha Vinyl explores a range of inspiring and authentic natural looks.

www.quick-step.co.uk





FLOORING'S FINEST

FLOORING'S FINEST

The Tomorrow's Contract Floors Awards 2026 are now live. We're thrilled to unveil our carefully curated shortlist showcasing the most outstanding products and services across the flooring industry today. Now, it's over to you to decide who will take home this year's coveted titles.

As one of the leading voices in the flooring sector, we have the privilege of seeing innovative launches month after month. Despite ongoing pressures across the construction industry, manufacturers continue to raise the bar – developing solutions that help you work faster, smarter, and with a lighter environmental footprint. Our awards exist to champion this excellence and celebrate best practice.

After months of detailed review, we've refined our longlist to just 35 standout products and services that have truly impressed us over the past year.

In making our final selection, we considered qualities such as installation efficiency, safety, aesthetics, durability, and, more prominently than ever, sustainability. From subfloor preparation to finished floorcoverings, and from aftercare to circular-economy solutions, this year's awards reflect every stage of the installation journey.

In our Awards Guide, you'll find everything you need to know about each finalist, including concise product descriptions and

direct contact details. If something sparks your interest, feel free to get in touch with the team behind it to explore further.

CHOOSE YOUR WINNER

It's time to cast your vote for the 2026 winner! Voting is now open, and you have until Monday 9th March 2026 to make your choice. Whether it's a trusted favourite or a groundbreaking new discovery, it's up to you to decide who will claim our first, second and third-place trophies when the results are announced in spring.

HOW TO VOTE

Voting is open to all Tomorrow's Contract Floors readers and couldn't be easier. Simply visit our poll, select your favourite nominee, and submit your vote. No need to provide your name – just pick your winner and click. You can leave a comment explaining your choice if you like, but the process is as quick and simple as you need it to be.

Just [CLICK HERE](#) to read the Guide.

THE FINALISTS

Acoustic Floor System for Weber by CMS Danskin Acoustics

Adriatico 70 by IVC Commercial

Altro Illustra by Altro

Art Select by Karndean Designflooring

Autonomous Tile Grouting Robot by Fabrica AI

BAL AF Max by BAL

Boho Bliss by Lifestyle Floors

Bona Mega EVO by Bona

Comfytex Deluxe Max by LeoLine

Creative Connections by Shaw Contract

Durabella by Diespeker & Co x Duracryl

Easy-Click Series by Harvey Maria

EGGER Flooring Collection 25+ by EGGER

EXTRA-LITE Range by Palace Chemicals

F586 – The Perfect Fix by Floorwise

Feelings by Beauflor

Floorsight by F. Ball and Co. Ltd

Hexparket by Junckers

Impervia Flooring by Impervia

Impressive by Quick-Step

LayRed by Moduleo

MeasureSquare CRM Business Management Suite by MeasureSquare

Modello by Millboard

MXS110 Smoothing Compound by Marldon

noraplan stone by Interface

Nuway Connect Plus by Forbo Flooring Systems

Orion 950 Smart Moisture Meter by Wagner Meters

Porcelain Paving Enhancer by ECOPROTEC

PPC Little Mixx by The Preparation Group

Proflow MVS by Kerakoll

Q-Range DUO Stair Nosing by Quantum Flooring Accessories

ScreedBoard 28 by Cellalecta

SX302 TREMSmooth MT by Tremco

The Slate Collection by Bjelin

Wool Tweed by Alternative Flooring

CLICK HERE TO VOTE NOW!

SCHOOL SUCCESS

When contractors were tasked with fitting wide-ranging floorcoverings for a new-build secondary school in Newcastle, they turned to Mapei.

Specialist Mapei preparation and adhesive products have been used, by Active Flooring Solutions Ltd, to complete an extensive flooring project at Great Park Academy in Newcastle. Part of the Gosforth Group Multi Academy Trust, Great Park Academy's new building spans over 8,500 m². The installation included classrooms, sports halls, corridors and washrooms, and featured Altro and Heckmondwike designs and Junckers wood flooring. The project was delivered by Galliford Try's Building North East and Yorkshire business unit.

Arranged across three storeys, Great Park Academy provides 1200 secondary school places to pupils from years 5-11. The building's flexible learning spaces include sports, music, art and drama facilities, a learning resource centre, suite of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities support spaces and external play, learning and multi-use games area.

"All products benefit from very low VOC EMICODE EM1 PLUS certified formulations which promoted a safe, comfortable application."

During floor preparations, cement subfloors were primed with ECO Prim T Plus and Mapeproof One Coat epoxy damp proof membrane was applied to control moisture. Latexplan Trade was used to smooth the surfaces.

Two Mapei adhesives were used to install the floorcoverings, which included Altro slip-resistant vinyl, wood-effect and safety flooring and Heckmondwike carpet tiles. They included Ultrabond ECO V4 Evolution all-in-one universal adhesive for the vinyl and Ultrabond ECO Tack TX+ carpet tile tackifier. Ultrabond ECO V4 Evolution was also used to install PVC coving and skirting. All products, along with the Mapei primer and smoothing compound, benefit from very low VOC EMICODE EC1 PLUS certified formulations which promoted a safe, comfortable application for the Active Flooring team.

Floorcoverings installed included Altro Walkway 20, Altro Aquarius in colour Hippo, Altro Wood in colour Oak Traditions, Altro Classic 25, Altro Reliance in colour Storm, Heckmondwike Array Emerald Carpet Tiles and Junckers SylvaSport Club fitted over New Era battens.

www.mapei.co.uk





FIX FLAWS FIRST

Ensuring a perfectly smooth base for the receipt of new floorcoverings is one of the first steps in any flooring installation. This will typically be achieved with the application of a smoothing compound. In some cases, it will also be necessary to first address imperfections in the subfloor beforehand to ensure a perfect finish. This is particularly important when installing thin, resilient floorcoverings. Jason Tatton, Technical Service Manager at F. Ball and Co. Ltd., advises on repair and finishing compound selection for this purpose.

Contractors should begin any flooring installation by ensuring the subfloor is suitably sound, smooth and dry enough for the receipt of new floorcoverings. As part of this, F. Ball recommends the application of a smoothing compound to achieve a smooth base. However, there will be occasions where prior preparation is required; where sand/cement screeds are mechanically damaged or ceramic tiles are missing, for example. Repair compounds are available for these situations.

Before any remedial work takes place, it is advisable to undertake a moisture test to determine subfloor moisture levels. Where subfloor Relative Humidity (RH) levels are above 75% (65% if wood floorcoverings will be installed), the application of a waterproof surface membrane will be required to prevent excess subfloor moisture potentially attacking adhesives and floorcoverings and resulting in floor failure. The requirement for a waterproof surface membrane will also have a bearing on repair compound selection and application.

■ ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the case that a contractor finds that the subfloor has dormant/static, non-structural cracks or holes in it, which may be the case where sand/cement screeds have been mechanically damaged, a suitable repair compound should be used to fill in the gaps.

For example, F. Ball's Stopgap 400 is a dry, fast-setting, rapid-drying repair compound that can be applied in thicknesses between 2-50mm to repair internal floors in light to heavy duty areas, including to fill gaps in tiled areas where individual ceramic tiles are missing.

Where excess subfloor moisture is detected, contractors will require a repair compound that is designed for use in damp conditions, prior to the application of a waterproof surface membrane. Some formulations of these products may be suitable for repairing external floors as part of refurbishment projects.

F. Ball's Stopgap Micro Rapid ultra-smooth, flexible floor finishing compound can also be used as a scratch coat up to 1mm to repair minor surface defects in many absorbent surfaces, including smoothing compounds, as well as smoothing discrepancies between different applications of concrete or smoothing compound. Stopgap Micro Rapid should be used after smoothing compound has been applied.

■ NEXT STEPS

Once a repair compound or finishing compound used to fill imperfections in the subfloor has dried, contractors can then proceed with the application of a smoothing compound as

recommended, remembering to prime the subfloor beforehand. Priming serves to promote adhesion and also maximises handling characteristics of smoothing compounds when applied over non-absorbent surfaces, such as ceramic tiles. When used over absorbent surfaces, primers also stop the unacceptably rapid drying of subsequently applied smoothing compounds and prevent pinholing: tiny bubbles formed by the slow escape of air from the subfloor, which burst on reaching the surface, leaving small pinholes as the smoothing compound cures.

Smoothing compound selection should be determined by the subfloor type and conditions to which the installation will be exposed. For example, heavy-duty smoothing compounds are available for areas that will be subject to heavy loads or high levels of foot traffic, and calcium sulphate-based smoothing compounds offer maximum compatibility with calcium sulphate screeds.

<https://f-ball.com/en>





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GOING WITH THE FLOW

Andy Vincent, sales & technical specifications at Cemfloor and board member of Flowing Screeds Association, outlines the history and benefits of flowing screeds for commercial flooring projects.

Most observers would have noticed a big increase in the use of liquid applied flowing screeds in the UK over the past five years or so. The reasons for this may seem obvious, but it is perhaps less easy to understand why this hasn't happened before.

The first real use of liquid screeds began in the UK in the very early 90s when anhydrite (gypsum) based liquid screeds became available. At that time, there was an expectation that they would see rapid growth and that the UK would move substantially to liquid instead of the traditional sand-and-cement-based, hand-applied materials that were used before.

The reasons for the expectation of rapid adoption of liquid screeds were obvious. The substantial increase in labour efficiency and speed that they offered should have been enough. Better performance at thinner sections, greater stability and resistance to cracking, relative ease of installing to high buildings, improved performance of underfloor heating (though this was relatively unused at the time), much better health and safety for operatives

– the list was extensive, but the rate of growth in the use of liquid screeds was not quite what might have been expected.

The growth in the use of liquid screeds has been consistent but steady until five or six years ago, reaching approximately 15% market share. This is at least in part due to the fact that anhydrite screeds, despite their obvious benefits, were not initially universally well received.

Those who have been resistant to anhydrite screeds would offer two reasons for this. Firstly, they would say that anhydrite screeds take a very long time to dry, and secondly, they would say that they are difficult to stick floor finishes to. Neither of these things are strictly true.

They are not properties of the screeds, and certainly not faults, but they have come to be believed due to the fact that in the UK we do not treat screeds well and we certainly do not manage the process of drying or the correct 'aftercare' of the screed. This can have consequences with all screeds, but it is more important with gypsum-based ones as the effects can be much more severe.

The past five or six years, however, have seen the growth that we had expected to happen much earlier. Today, liquid screeds are widely reported to account for comfortably more than 40% of the market.

The arrival in the UK of liquid screeds based on cement rather than gypsum has certainly been a factor in market development, but despite the rapid increase in the use of these materials, the gypsum products have also seen growth. Perhaps the cement materials have 'stirred things up', but it seems apparent that market conditions have also been a factor.



The construction industry is seeing a labour and skills shortage in general, and this is very apparent for screed installers. Plainly, a labour shortage can be offset by using installation methods that are quicker by 10 times or more, as liquid screeds are.

The speed is also of benefit to the project itself, as is the ability to pump materials to height relatively easily. London has been the earliest and quickest adopter of liquid screeds, and it is not difficult to see why with its prevalence of large and high buildings.

Underfloor heating has seen a rapid increase in use in the UK in recent years, driven by the need for energy efficiency and the regulation changes that support this. The benefits to underfloor heating of using a liquid screed are manifold.

In short, the same list of benefits that we saw for liquid screeds in the early 90s seem now to have been recognised and are being realised. Every indication is that the rapid growth of the last five years will continue for the next three at least, such that we will see the overall share of liquid screeds over 75%.

Liquid screeds are certainly here to stay. We can expect that there will be more brands arriving over the next year or so and more companies will become involved in the manufacture and installation. No doubt there will be even higher performance materials developed, and we might see even more efficient installation methods.

One thing that we are not likely to see is anybody who will be sorry to see the back of the old, slow, and labour-intensive screed installation methods that are already beginning to look a bit archaic.

www.flowingscreedsassociation.com



SCREED WITH SPEED

Mapei beats the clock with fast-track Topcem binders.

A good screed is the foundation of a good floor installation – and, when speed and performance is of the essence, Mapei's Topcem range provides the solution. Developed to increase mechanical strength and reduce shrinkage and drying time, Topcem can be used to form unbonded and bonded screeds on new and existing slabs in interior and exterior applications, before the installation of wood, tiles and stone, resilient and textile floorcoverings. The series includes standard Topcem and Topcem Pronto, which each benefit from a safety-assured EMICODE: EC1 Plus-certified formulation.

Mapei Topcem is a special fast-drying hydraulic binder that's added to aggregates and water on-site. It's used in normal setting, fast-drying and shrinkage-compensated and heated screeds. Topcem Pronto is a mortar pre-blended with aggregates, that's combined with water on site; high thermal conductivity makes it especially suitable for heated screeds.

Both Topcem and Topcem Pronto set to light traffic after just 12 hours, making them ideal for application in fast-track projects. Ceramic tiles can be laid after 24 hours and natural stone after two days. Within four days the finish is completely dry and can accept moisture sensitive floorcoverings, including resilient and wood flooring. In addition to new applications, both formulations can also be used for patching, repairing and time-sensitive screed replacement.

www.mapei.co.uk



SETTING STANDARDS

Palace Chemicals explains how its fibre-enhanced screed solutions are setting higher benchmarks for strength, flexibility and long-term durability in commercial flooring.

Today's flooring industry is increasingly looking for products which combine speed, reliability and long-term performance, especially when working with challenging substrates, large-format tiles and underfloor heating systems. Palace Chemicals has responded with its advanced Reinforced Fibre Technology (RFT). This fibre-enhanced chemistry is designed to deliver improved shrinkage resistance, flexural strength, as well as impact and abrasion resistance, helping floorlayers achieve flawless results even in demanding conditions.

The Palace levelling range stretches from deep-fill performance to rapid turnaround 'fast access' solutions, all supported by the structural benefits of RFT. This gives the company's levellers optimum strength and stability, as they change the mechanics by giving added reinforcement dispersed throughout the mix, helping to control how the levelling compound responds to stress from heat, load and the service environment.

Across the range, RFT brings tangible benefits. The incorporation of microfibres and performance fillers delivers increased strength, flexibility and resistance to cracking. The fibres create a stable internal matrix, distributing load and stress more evenly through the compound. This not only supports thicker applications but also helps ensure that levelling remains consistent across a variety of substrates.

This enhanced flexibility is particularly important in modern flooring environments, where surfaces are increasingly subject to movement, thermal variation and vibration. RFT products also contribute to long-term durability and provide installers with a greater margin for when site conditions are not always in their favour – essential qualities for achieving reliable, professional results.

Key products in the range include THICK BED REINFORCED FLOOR LEVELLING COMPOUND which can be used up to an 80mm

bed depth, through to solutions where a rapid early strength finish is required such as FAST-FLEX, both of which have proven performance when used with a range of underfloor heating types.

These products have the ability to level floors in a single pour and are suitable for different types of installation, conforming to all relevant standards and providing the usual Palace technical excellence and lifetime guarantee of effectiveness, where a specification has been provided by the company.

The Palace RFT technology is included in THICK BED FLOOR LEVELLING COMPOUND which is suitable for applications on a wide range of floor surfaces, such as tamped or worn concrete, sand/cement screeds, mastic asphalt, plywood and other dense, impermeable surfaces. This product is particularly suited for installation within heated subfloor specifications, where its ability to be laid to a thick-bed is usually sufficient to accommodate most types of wire or pipe-based heating systems. Its fibre-reinforced performance also gives the wet mix enhanced cohesion and reduced segregation, as fibres help keep the mix stable, reducing aggregate settlement and surface bleeding, which then prevents surface laitance on the cured floor top.

THICK BED FLOOR LEVELLING COMPOUND is fast setting and flexible, offering high early strength to take foot traffic after just three hours. It can be laid from 3mm up to 80mm bed depth, making it ideal for use with underfloor heating systems. It is suitable for either pump or trowel application and can receive tiles after just four hours or a vinyl covering after 24 hours.

Sitting alongside THICK BED is FAST-FLEX FLOOR LEVELLER. Designed for versatility and speed, FAST-FLEX delivers excellent flow, superb surface smoothness and outstanding early strength. It supports bed depths from 2mm to 50mm, making it suitable for everything from minor corrections to substantial levelling tasks.

Its high early strength characteristics mean that it can take foot traffic after just three hours. It is suitable for pump application. Tiles can be fixed after just four hours and other floorcoverings after 24 hours.

"Innovation in order to provide our customers with more technically competent products, which are also easier to use, is a key motivation at Palace Chemicals," says Steve Ball, Commercial Director. "Our floor levelling range, which includes products containing Reinforced Fibre Technology, is a great example of this."

palacechemicals.co.uk



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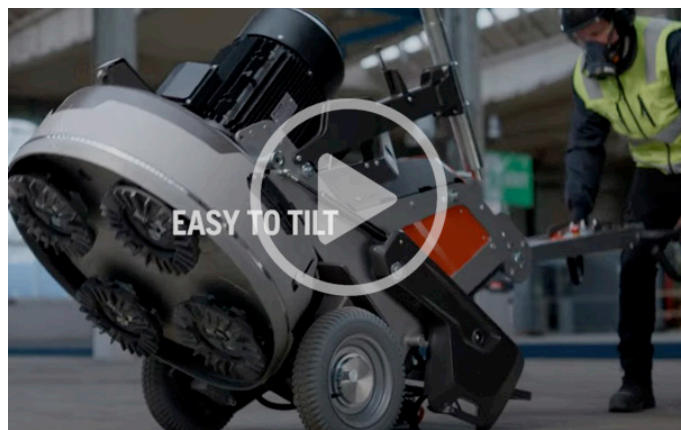
Measure Square™



Scott Bentley, Business Development Manager at **MeasureSquare**, sits down to discuss more about the new MeasureSquare CRM launched earlier this year and how flooring businesses are benefiting from a one stop shop fully integrated solution by reducing data duplication from multiple software systems. Scott also discusses MeasureSquare's commitment to innovation and what users can expect in the coming months.

Contact: scott.b@measuresquare.co.uk

03302233946

www.measuresquare.co.uk**Full video
here**

Whatever the flooring challenge, you can tackle it with **Husqvarna's** new range of large floor grinders. It's easier than ever to choose the right machine, work faster and get the results you want – whether you're removing a coating, grinding or creating a beautifully polished surface. The range is part of a full solution that includes machines, diamond tools, dust extractors, and support – all from The Complete Partner in Surface Preparation.

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0344 844 4569

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SERVING STYLE

Havwoods has collaborated with SMASH by THG Studios for their latest project – a tech-powered padel studio built for immersive brand storytelling, community engagement and high-impact digital content creation.

Harnessing the UK's fastest-growing sport of the moment, padel, THG Studios has launched SMASH by THG Studios, the world's first immersive padel court for brands and content creators. Housed within THG Studios, one of Europe's largest creative content studios, the fully immersive padel court provides brands with an innovative canvas to produce everything from social media campaigns and exclusive influencer events to high-production commercials and live-streamed tournaments.

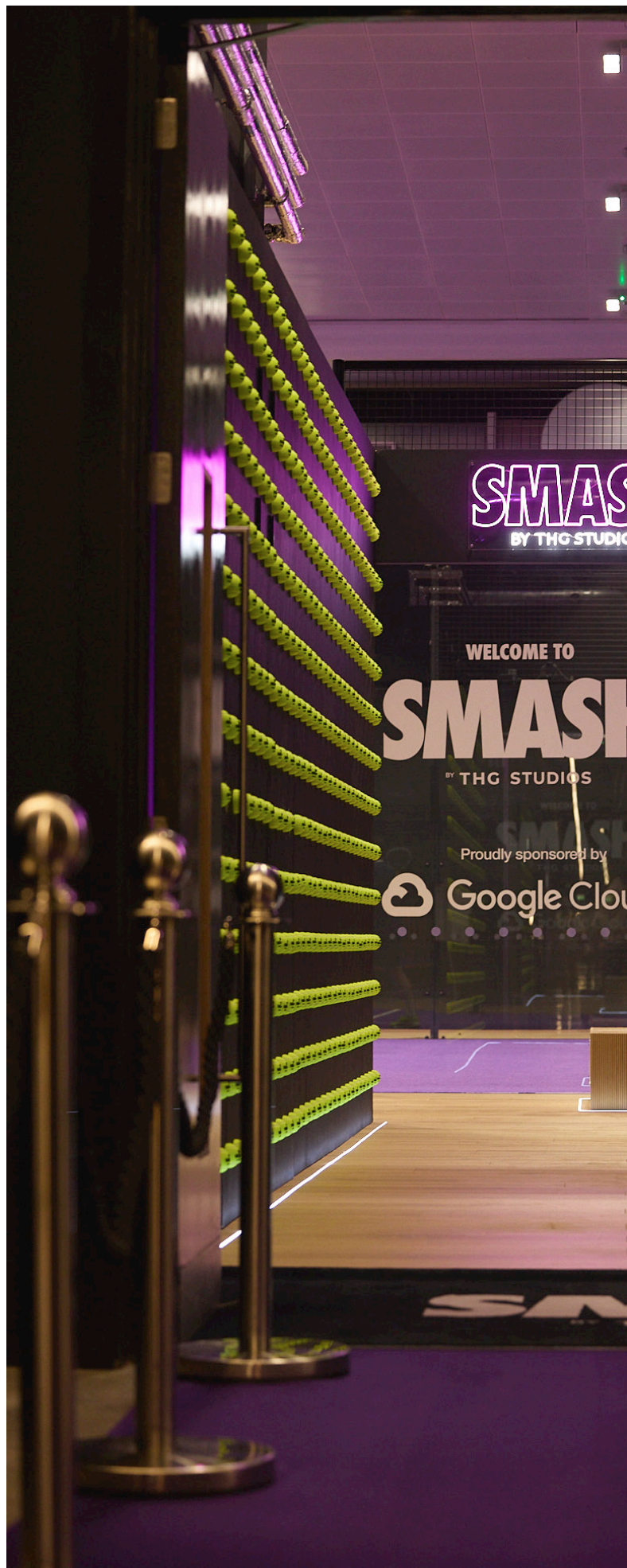
SMASH by THG Studios features integrated Google Cloud technology to enable real-time player measurement and game analysis, a world first outside of professional football. This tech-driven stage can capture in-depth player and game metrics, offering brands data-driven content opportunities. Every serve, swing and rally is captured and transformed into high-impact digital content, turning raw energy and authentic human moments into storytelling that moves audiences and amplifies brand impact.

Alongside world-renowned brands Slazenger and Myprotein, leading wood surface brand Havwoods has sponsored and supplied the premium timber and high-quality design materials used throughout the venue's viewing area. For the venue floor and entranceway, Azur from the PurePlank collection was chosen for its unbeatable durability, textured finish and soft blonde tones. On the SMASH brand wall and Slazenger giant ball plinth, the tactile Oak Fresato from the Elegante Veneer range adds depth and interest, while in the sports recovery bar and equipment display, Natural Oak panels from the acoustic Hushwood collection offer a modern touch.

As SMASH by THG Studios launches its content series and branded tournaments, Havwoods' flooring solutions will be visible to a broad audience of brands, creators and media. For specifiers, architects and interiors professionals scanning for material inspiration in experiential spaces, SMASH by THG Studios serves as a compelling example, showcasing beautiful premium wood surfaces that add richness, luxury aesthetic and tactile quality in what could otherwise be seen as a functional arena.

Andy Barnes, Global Managing Director at Havwoods, said: "The growing sport of padel, much like Havwoods, is built around shared values of community and collaboration. This space is about creating moments where people can connect, move, laugh and enjoy themselves in spaces that feel welcoming, inclusive and support health and happiness in every sense. We're proud to be involved in something that celebrates the power of community, wellness and design working hand in hand."

www.havwoods.com/uk





GET SET

Mapei makes its mark with Mapecoat TNS system.

From spectator stand to arena, Mapei's expansive range of adhesives, surfaces and coatings provides a complete technical solution for the sports sector. Many systems are designed to provide specific technical characteristics, whilst others – like Mapecoat TNS – offer a finishing solution for a variety of leisure environments.

Formulated from water-based acrylic resin, Mapei Mapecoat TNS is a multi-layered coating and finishing system. The range includes a solvent-free adhesion promoting primer and three individual coatings which each provide exceptional resistance to wear, weathering and UV-rays.

Recommended for application before each of the coatings, Mapecoat TNS Primer EPW is a two-component epoxy primer used in tandem with acrylic and polyurethane resins from Mapei's TNS and PU ranges. It can be applied onto asphalt, cement, existing resin and resilient sports floors and prefabricated rubber elastic mats, and its solvent-free formulation promotes a safe application outside and indoors. The coatings include Mapecoat TNS Fast, Mapecoat TNS Extreme and Mapecoat TNS Finish 1.3.4.

A rapid film-forming colour coating that achieves an R13 slip resistant rating, Mapecoat TNS Fast is an acrylic water-based finish designed to protect surfaces from high footfall. In sports environments, it can be used to create cycle lanes and tracks, and to colour and protect spectator stands. It can also be applied onto bituminous conglomerate surfaces, ramps and within parking areas.

Two component water-based coloured top coat – Mapecoat TNS Extreme – is a rapid-drying protective coating for cementitious and bituminous substrates and pavers, tested according to EN 1504-2. Exceptionally durable, it forms a protective coating in car traffic and pedestrian areas, as well as cycle lanes, and provides a high level of skid resistance in all weathers. Mapecoat TNS Extreme is also available in a bespoke palette to reflect team or corporate colours.

The third TNS coating system – MAPECOAT TNS FINISH 1.3.4 – is formulated with selected fillers for indoor and outdoor tennis courts (certified by the International Tennis Federation) and multi-purpose playing surfaces, including basketball, volleyball and 5-a-side football pitches. It's available in three court-pace categories – 1, 3 and 4 – for slow pace, medium pace and medium-fast pace activities, each providing perfect ball bounce and a secure directional change. The finish is available in 24 colours and bespoke shades.

www.mapei.co.uk





ELITE LEVEL

F. Ball products perform in Tallaght Sports Complex.

Technical advice and products from F. Ball and Co. Ltd. have helped to overcome subfloor preparation challenges and provide a surface that will stand up to years of expected wear in a sports complex in Tallaght, County Dublin, Ireland.

After removing old vinyl flooring along with adhesive residues, contractors from NT Flooring found a rough and uneven concrete screed. A subsequent moisture test indicated that excess subfloor moisture risked floor failure without a moisture management solution in place, and expansion joints were also present in the base.

A waterproof surface membrane applied to a particularly rough or uneven surface can pool in undulations on the surface, necessitating a greater quantity of product to achieve full coverage, as well as an extended curing period.

Based on this assessment, F. Ball's Ireland technical representative and detailed specification by F. Ball and Co. Ltd. recommended that the subfloor was first primed with the company's Stopgap P131 general-purpose primer before applying Stopgap 1200 smoothing compound over the entire 600m² area to create a smooth base for other subfloor preparation products.

As well as being suitable for application over old adhesive residues, the product is moisture tolerant, meaning that it can be used to smooth rough or uneven subfloors prior to the application of a waterproof surface membrane.

F. Ball's Stopgap F77 one-part waterproof surface membrane was then used to prevent excess subfloor moisture attacking floorcoverings and adhesives, potentially causing complete floor failure. The product dries in as little as three hours to create a barrier against moisture values of up to 98% RH with a single coat application.

Once dry, the surface was primed using F. Ball's Stopgap P141, which is designed especially to promote the adhesion of smoothing compounds to non-absorbent surfaces, including waterproof surface membranes. Another layer of Stopgap 1200 would create a perfectly smooth base for the receipt of new floorcoverings. Applied at a thickness of 2-5mm, it is walk-on hard from 60 minutes and dry enough to receive floorcoverings in as little as four hours.

"Stopgap F77 one-part waterproof surface membrane was used to prevent excess subfloor moisture attacking floorcoverings and adhesives, potentially causing complete floor failure"

Once the smoothing compound had cured and to complete a full F. Ball system installation.

NT Flooring installed Gerflor Taraflex sports flooring using F. Ball's Styccobond F58 PLUS vinyl adhesive.

Its fast-drying formulation enables floorcoverings to be secured from just five minutes after application. It transitions from a wet-lay to a fully pressure-sensitive adhesive and includes reinforcing fibres that provide resistance to lateral movement when working. With an extended open time of around three hours when used as a pressure-sensitive adhesive, it allows large areas to be covered in a single application without risking late placement of floorcoverings.

All preparation products and floorcoverings were terminated on either side of expansion joints and preformed joint or expansion joint cover installed.

www.f-ball.co.uk



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A SMARTER FIX

When offices within Lancashire Business Park were in need of refurbishment, Wrennalls Group installed Forbo's Tessera Contour and Tessera Teviot carpet tiles adhesive free, using IOBAC Tab-Its to minimise waste and promote circularity.

Managed by Lancashire County Developments Ltd (LCDL) on behalf of Lancashire County Council, the offices at Lancashire Business Park have been in service for decades, with Wrennalls Group having helped to maintain the site for nearly 40 years.

Over the years, the flooring has regularly been replaced, due to the daily wear and tear. Helen Orson, business park manager at LCDL, said: "We currently manage five different communal office spaces. Over time the flooring in these offices understandably becomes worn and needs replacing with a newer solution, something which Wrennalls Group facilitates for us.

"This can subsequently create a fair amount of textile waste at the end of the products' life as recycling is often difficult due

to the tackifier glue traditionally used to install carpet tiles, something which we and Lancashire County Council are keen to avoid as much as possible. As a result, it was suggested to us that we opt for an adhesive-free flooring solution instead."

Shaun Bradbury, managing director at Wrennalls Group, expanded on this further: "Helen was very clear that LCDL and the County Council wanted to minimise waste as much as possible for this latest round of refurbishments. As such, I suggested that IOBAC Tab-Its could be used with Forbo's Tessera carpet tiles. They were immediately very keen to explore this option and after presenting them with the IOBAC and Tessera products, we began refurbishing the spaces.

"Having helped Forbo with all the testing for the IOBAC products, I knew the value they could add to this project. Using a dry-tack adhesion method, each Tab-It is placed on the subfloor with the carpet tile then securely attached in the normal way. Not only does this mean the floorcovering can be easily removed which is ideal if individual tiles need to be replaced due to damage, but it also allows the flooring to be easily recycled as there's no adhesive residue."

Designed and made in the UK, from a Lancashire based factory, Forbo's Tessera carpet tiles are not only renowned for their aesthetic styling, but also their outstanding performance even



in the most demanding, high-traffic environments. With a high recycled content (of up to 76%) and manufactured in a factory running off of 100% renewable energy (electricity and biogas), the collection also has strong sustainability credentials. In addition to this, they offer versatility in the ways in which they can be installed, being compatible with IOBAC's range of Tab-Its and MagTabs, enabling adhesive free installs and promoting circularity – one of Forbo's core sustainability principles.

"Using Tab-Its allows the flooring to be easily recycled as there's no adhesive residue."

Helen continued: "Forbo's Tessera carpet tiles being compatible with IOBAC Tab-Its was particularly beneficial for us, as we want to look to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill, preferring to recycle as much as we possibly can. The ability for each tile to be individually uplifted for replacement was particularly attractive to us too, as scuff marks or damage can be quite common, especially in the high-traffic areas of the offices."

"So far, the refurbishments have gone very well, any issues have been quickly and easily resolved, and most tenants aren't even aware the carpet tiles have been installed any differently. The absence of adhesive also means there are no lingering odours after installation. The Tessera carpet tiles look really professional in the space and can stand up to the wear and tear expected within the office space. The benefits of opting for an adhesive-free installation will continue to be felt further down the line too, facilitating quicker refurbishments in the future and a more sustainable process, providing immense long-term benefits to ourselves and the council."

All of Forbo's Tessera carpet tiles can be installed using IOBAC products, both Tab-Its and MagTabs, allowing them to be fitted over metal raised access flooring or typical subfloors. This means that further down the line the flooring can be easily uplifted and recycled or reused through Forbo's partnership with the Salvation Army's 'Take Back' scheme.

Once installed, the carpet tiles are then maintained using the M2 Fusion Care system. Fusion Care operates with 95% less water than the normal system of cleaning, produces no waste product, uses non-hazardous and biodegradable cleaning solutions – further supporting the sustainability of both LCDL and Forbo.

www.forbo-flooring.co.uk/tessera
<https://iobac.com>



GOING PRO

Bostik supports a technically demanding heritage refurbishment at Brancepeth Castle Golf Club, delivering a complete system to overcome moisture and subfloor challenges.

Subfloor preparation and adhesive manufacturer Bostik partnered with Elvet Flooring Solutions to tackle a technical dining area refurbishment at Brancepeth Castle Golf Club, Country Durham.

The project presented several technical challenges typical of heritage buildings. The over 100-year-old structure had high moisture readings, and remnants of bitumen adhesive from previous floorcoverings. However, Bostik's technical support and comprehensive flooring system enabled the contractor to deliver a modern, durable LVT installation completed on schedule for an upcoming wedding celebration.

■ HERITAGE BUILDING OBSTACLES

The dining area at Brancepeth Castle Golf Club had become dated, prompting the club to commission a complete refurbishment of the approximately 85m² space. The room's age and condition presented obstacles that needed addressing before any new flooring could be installed.

"The comprehensive system addressed both the moisture challenge and the bitumen contamination."

Once the old carpet was lifted, the project team discovered aged Marley tiles adhered to the concrete subfloor with bitumen adhesive. Removing these tiles and the adhesive residue was only the first hurdle. Given that the building pre-dates 1924, there was believed to be no structural damp-proof membrane present – a common issue in period properties. Moisture testing readings confirmed the challenge, with measurement levels that would compromise any flooring installation without proper treatment.

The project also carried time pressures, as the refurbished space was needed for a wedding that had already been booked. The contractor required a reliable technical solution that would address the moisture issues, encapsulate the bitumen residue, and create a stable substrate for luxury vinyl tile installation – all within a tight timeframe.

■ FULL SYSTEM SPECIFICATION

Matt Williams of Elvet Flooring Solutions contacted Bostik's technical team early in the project to ensure the right approach from the outset. The team conducted a thorough site inspection and provided a detailed technical report with step-by-step recommendations tailored to the specific conditions at Brancepeth Castle Golf Club.

"I contacted Bostik when I was first asked to look at the job, and they came up to inspect it," Matt Williams explained. "They carried out a full site visit and provided a recommendation and site report which was emailed to me to follow."

The Bostik system began with subfloor preparation using SL C955 ADVANCED, a high-performance, moisture-tolerant smoothing compound with exceptional adhesion properties. Applied at a minimum thickness of 3mm, it was used to pre-smooth and encapsulate the existing bitumen adhesive residue without the need for priming – a key advantage that saved both time and labour on site.

To mitigate against moisture, the team applied HYTEC E570 ONE COAT, a two-part, solvent-free epoxy damp-proof membrane designed specifically for situations where no structural damp proof membrane exists. Capable of suppressing residual construction moisture in cementitious subfloors up to 99% RH, it provided reliable, long-term moisture protection for the floorcovering system.

Following the moisture barrier, a final application of SL C955 ADVANCED smoothing compound created a perfectly smooth surface ready for adhesive application. The contractor chose STIX A930 MULTI FASER, a fibre-reinforced, high-temperature adhesive for bonding the Tarkett Inspiration Classic LVT. This particular adhesive choice was especially appropriate given the room's large windows and potential exposure to solar gain – conditions where standard adhesives might fail.

"I've always been happy with Bostik products, and the Bostik app is very helpful," Matt Williams noted, highlighting the practical support available to installers throughout the process.

The Bostik Technical Consultant commented on the team's approach: "Due to the age of the property, we needed to perform a hygrometer test as it was believed that a structural damp proof membrane was not present. The comprehensive system we recommended addressed both the moisture challenge and the bitumen contamination, giving the contractor confidence in a long-term solution."

■ TRANSFORMATION DELIVERED ON TIME

The refurbishment transformed the century-old dining space from a dark, dated room into a bright, modern function area that the golf club can now promote with confidence. The installation was completed on schedule, ready for the wedding celebration that had been booked.

Matt Williams expressed satisfaction with both the technical performance and the support received: "As a fitter, it's reassuring to know there's a written recommendation behind the job and that Bostik is there in the background if any questions come up."

The use of a complete Bostik system – from moisture control through to final adhesive – gave both the contractor and client reassurance that the installation would perform reliably for years to come. The golf club now has a versatile events space that meets contemporary expectations whilst respecting the building's heritage, and the venue can actively market the room for functions and celebrations.

<https://bostik-profloor.co.uk>



ZONE IN

As wellbeing remains a key design influence, ease of navigation is increasingly becoming a focus for supporting inclusive and positive environments. Louisa Eyles, commercial marketing manager at Amtico, explains how LVT flooring can support zoning.

Commercial flooring delivers more than aesthetics and durability; it's an essential tool, especially with the growing focus on wayfinding, wellness and inclusive design trends.

In all sectors and industries, improving ease of wayfinding facilitates positive feelings and experiences for occupants, including neurodiverse individuals. Repetitive layouts and a lack of visual cues can make it easy for anyone to get lost; however, making small design changes can improve navigation and also help employees, customers or visitors understand the intended function of a room or space.

For instance, visual zoning using colour is an effective way for people to quickly identify quiet workstations in offices. Equally, it can help with navigation around a building or locating communal areas in build-to-rent developments. Zoning can be easily achieved with LVT flooring, whether by adding a perimeter plank border and bespoke number pattern in the 'assigned' colours for each floor, or opting for contrasting planks and tiles in different areas. If subtle visual zoning is required, contractors can take a considered approach by layering LVT designs in woods and stones. The methods work well and meet the demand for inclusive design.

However, there's more to LVT flooring than colours and decors. Simply put, high-quality manufactured flooring can be specified and laid in a multitude of ways that help demarcate zones. For example, Amtico flooring was chosen for the multi-use amenity spaces at The Headline building in Leeds. Here, an innovative combination of laying patterns with colours and woods enabled





the spaces to be both functional and visually appealing for the residents. The flooring's subtle cues made it clear which zones were for entertaining, relaxing and working.

It's clear that good design has a positive impact on occupants. Indeed, we're seeing more designers and contractors take a 'resimercial' approach in workplace projects – a hybrid of 'residential' and 'commercial' design. This trend is increasingly prominent in office projects where flooring design is used to demarcate specific departments, meeting areas or quiet workspaces. Such variations show that companies recognise their employees' need for personal space, while safeguarding the familiar office culture which encourages collaboration, productivity and creativity.

We have also seen floor designs increase in scale as interiors specialists choose a combination of small- and large-format tiles to divide open-plan spaces using materials or colour. In addition, key areas can be defined in a subtle, but design-led way using material and texture combinations, such as LVT in terrazzo or aged oak designs. This provides pattern and detail, as opposed to relying on abstract shapes and strong contrasts of colour to outline a zone.

Consequently, with the evolution of integrated design solutions, zones shouldn't just be regarded as isolating or separating a space visually. For example, specifying safety LVT flooring in a stone decor from Amtico's Spacia 36+ collection for a tea point area that requires enhanced slip resistance, while fitting the same decor in the standard LVT version to the perimeter without creating any visual interruptions. Given there is so much potential with LVT, it is best to work with a leading flooring manufacturer to help bring project ideas to life.

Ultimately, it's vital to create the right experience for the user – and LVT makes this simple, as it can be integrated so seamlessly. Regardless of trends, design-based or otherwise, flooring will always have a multitude of roles to fulfil and LVT will continue to grow and establish itself as the top choice for commercial projects.

QUOTE WITH CONFIDENCE

Jason Spangler, sales manager at Wagner Meters, explains how using a concrete moisture meter before you bid can help you quote accurately, win the right jobs, and protect your professional reputation.



A C555 Concrete Moisture Meter allows you to take fast and non-invasive measurements in concrete subfloors.

You're partway through a residential flooring job when you realise the original quote you gave is way off. Why? Because you didn't do a pre-bid moisture assessment. Now comes the awkward conversation with your customer about increased timelines and moisture mitigation costs. And all because you didn't look for hidden moisture hotspots beforehand.

Even if your customer covers the extra costs with little complaint, situations like this can harm your professional reputation. And it can gum up your workflow. So, how can you avoid over- or under-bidding on a flooring installation?

The answer is to do concrete moisture testing with a concrete moisture meter before you accept a job. It's the smart way to protect your profit and create happy customers.

Let's break down the most important details of pre-bid moisture testing:

- Reduces risk.
- Works with a C555 Concrete Moisture Meter.
- Sets your business up for success.

First, a quick run-through of what can happen without doing pre-assessment.

■ SKIPPING CONCRETE MOISTURE TESTING ISN'T HELPING ANYONE

Hidden moisture in concrete subfloors can move upward and ruin the floorcovering. And when you don't check moisture levels before you build the quote for job, it can lead to issues like:

- Overbidding because the subfloor wasn't as wet as you thought – causing you to lose the bid.

- Underbidding because the subfloor was wetter than you thought – extending your timeline and adding moisture mitigation costs.
- Unknowingly taking on 'problem jobs' that lead to expensive callbacks and a damaged reputation.
- Inaccurate assumptions that an older concrete slab doesn't need either mitigation, or further investigation to fix a leak.

Visual inspection alone isn't an accurate concrete moisture assessment. But let's face it – using an in-situ RH test isn't practical for most residential flooring installers. Here's why:

1. Time may not allow – especially for pre-bid quoting.
2. It's a big investment for a job you don't actually have yet.
3. Potential customers might not appreciate you drilling a hole into their subfloor before you're hired.

So, what's the solution?

■ CONCRETE MOISTURE METERS: THE PERFECT PRE-BID TOOL

Concrete moisture meters help you find moisture hotspots in concrete slabs. And the non-invasive surface meters, like Wagner's C555 concrete moisture meter, are perfect for building job quotes because:

- They make it fast and easy to take multiple readings.
- They don't damage the concrete slab.
- A single moisture meter protects you on multiple jobs, saving you money.
- It sets you apart from other bidders who skip moisture testing.

Some kinds of concrete moisture testing cause concrete damage and take more time.

For example, RH testing requires drilling a small hole in the concrete. And even a high-quality test, like the Rapid RH L6, requires waiting 24 hours to get a reading.

The time, money, and invasive nature make RH testing better for making final installation decisions once you have the job. But they don't make sense for building quotes. That's why surface concrete moisture meters make the most sense for pre-bid moisture assessments. And for a reliable quote, the more accurate, the better.

■ USING THE C555 CONCRETE MOISTURE METER

A pre-bid moisture assessment involves taking quick scans of accessible areas such as under carpet corners and exposed concrete at the initial site visit. To describe how it works, we're using the C555 Handheld Concrete Moisture. It's user-friendly, and about twice as accurate as other leading concrete moisture meters, according to a recent study. And it'll give you confidence as you:

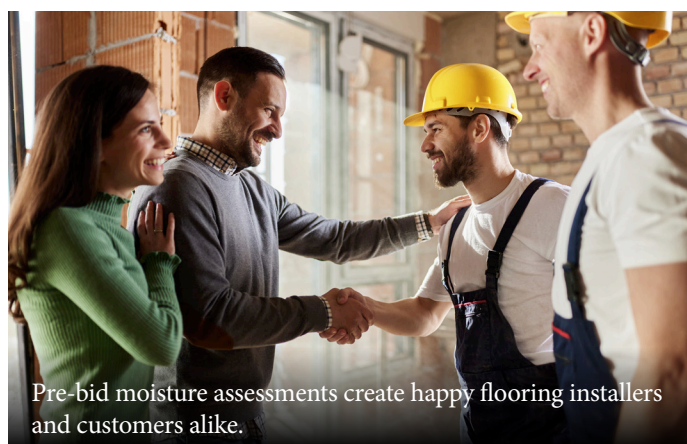
- Take quick measurements while your customer waits – and often watches.
- Decide whether or not to greenlight a job. Some suggest a reading below 3.5 is safe – but you might want to check with your manufacturer.
- Write an accurate bid that includes moisture mitigation if needed.
- Start flooring installation, knowing you've protected yourself and your customer.

Let's break down how to measure concrete subfloors in real time:

1. Educate the customer on what you're doing and how it helps them.
2. Pull back the corner of the existing floorcovering, if needed.
3. Make sure the surface is smooth and debris-free.
4. Turn on the C555 Concrete Moisture Meter.
5. Press the meter down so the sensor plate is flush against the slab.
6. You'll see a near-instant moisture reading displayed on a backlit screen.

For an added professional touch, you can press the hold button and show some readings to the customer.

It's best to measure a few areas of a subfloor for the big picture. If one area is wetter than another, it can alert you to a hidden leak. Or if you see consistent moisture levels and relatively lower numbers, this could indicate that it's safe to greenlight the job.



Pre-bid moisture assessments create happy flooring installers and customers alike.

With a general picture of subfloor moisture, you can choose to write a quote – or not. And preliminary slab evaluation can alert you to include moisture mitigation costs in your quote. Or readings could reveal that putting in a lower bid might be worth the risk.

If you don't discover the need for moisture mitigation until after the customer accepts your bid, it could cost you, or them, thousands of dollars that neither of you are prepared for.

And if you skip pre-installation moisture testing and start installation too soon, you risk moisture-related flooring failures. In either case, nobody wins.

■ THE COMPLETE PICTURE OF CONCRETE MOISTURE

Once you win a bid or a customer accepts your quote, the usefulness of a concrete moisture meter continues. It helps you locate moisture hotspots, so you know where to follow up with an RH test. The two tools can work as partners to locate moisture and verify proper subfloor prep.

The C555 concrete moisture meter is the ultimate tool for pre-bid measurements because it's non-destructive. And once you're on the job, it's a helpful part of pre-installation moisture testing by locating trouble spots and checking for overall even drying.

But adding an in-situ RH test gives you the relative humidity readings for final flooring installation decisions when it makes sense.

As always, check what kind of moisture testing the flooring manufacturer requires. But, let's review why it matters to have the right tool at the right time.

■ TAKE OUT THE GUESSWORK. GAIN THE ADVANTAGE.

The bottom line is: if you skip pre-bid moisture assessments, you're risking more than you might realize. Inaccurate bids and flooring failures can damage your time and your bottom line. Plus, you're more likely to end up stuck in a nightmare job. And you're missing opportunities to stand out from the pack and land more high-quality, straightforward jobs.

Using a concrete moisture meter can make all the difference because:

1. It differentiates you from other installers in your market.
2. It helps you land the jobs you want with fewer surprises.

Using a concrete moisture meter gives you and your potential customers more confidence about the accuracy of your quotes. And it builds trust as you paint the reality for them right up front.

When you finish a job without unexpected setbacks, it increases the chance of getting positive reviews and word-of-mouth referrals.

You want floors that stand the test of time. And your finished work is a lasting advertisement for your business. That's why it's smart to arm yourself with that concrete moisture meter that's twice as accurate as the rest. Shop for C555 Concrete Moisture Meter today.

www.WagnerMeters.com



RAISING THE LEVEL

F. Ball's Stopgap 1600 smoothing compound has provided a fast-track solution for raising floor levels as part of the ground-floor refurbishment of a residential property in Wainscott, Kent.

Fitters were contracted by wholesale flooring distribution company STS Flooring to install LVT floorcoverings in the majority of the downstairs of the property, including an open-plan lounge and dining area, hallway and reception room, an area totaling 48m².

After uplifting old engineered wood floorcoverings and mechanically grinding off adhesive residues from the concrete subfloors, it was necessary to raise subfloors by 20mm so that new floorcoverings would reach the level of skirting and door frames, as well as a new fireplace installed on a slate plinth.

The surface was first primed with Stopgap P131, diluted with four parts water, before F. Ball's Stopgap 400 Repair was used to make minor repairs to the subfloor and raise the floor level in the lounge and dining area where the concrete sloped towards one end of the room.

F. Ball's Stopgap 1600 fast-drying, fibre-reinforced smoothing compound was then applied. The product is formulated

especially for use over underfloor heating systems and can be applied between 3 – 40mm thick to encapsulate electrical wired or water-fed systems installed over internal subfloors as part of new build or refurbishment projects in both domestic and commercial environments.

It is suitable for use over a wide range of absorbent and non-absorbent subfloors, walk-on hard from three hours after application and ready to receive floorcoverings in as little as 12 hours.

The fitters then installed wood-effect STS LVTs, in a herringbone formation, in each of the three rooms. To do this, they used F. Ball's Styccobond F49 Hybrid PS temperature tolerant, pressure sensitive adhesive because patio doors at one end of the dining room had the potential to cause solar gain and, consequently, extreme temperatures and temperature fluctuations – this can cause floorcoverings to expand and contract significantly, potentially leading to unsightly tenting and gapping at the edge of vinyl floorcoverings over time. Styccobond F49 Hybrid PS develops the ultra-high bond strength to hold the floorcoverings firmly in place.

Commenting on the project, Jack Bradbury, one of the fitters sub-contracted by STS Flooring, said: "This was the first time we've used Stopgap 1600, and we were really impressed by its consistency. Fibres were evenly distributed throughout the product, and the drying time was really quick. As well as the temperature tolerant characteristics of Styccobond F49, we like its other features, including the ability to reposition floorcoverings in the early stages of drying. It is one of the best adhesives that I've used."

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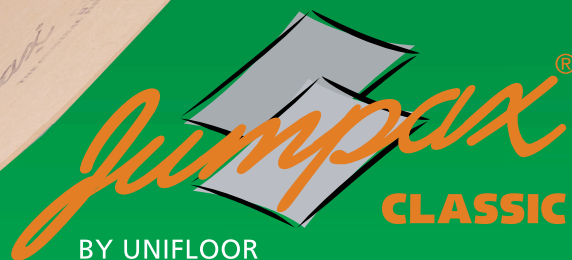
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THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Bjelin discusses how its hardened wood flooring brings the beauty of real timber with premium laminate-level performance to residential flooring.

For homeowners who've long wrestled with the classic flooring dilemma – choosing between the authentic beauty of real wood and the practical performance of premium laminate – Bjelin's Woodura flooring offers a compelling solution that delivers both.

■ REDEFINING HARDWOOD FOR MODERN LIVING

Bjelin, part of the Pervanovo Invest AB Group and sister company to renowned flooring innovator Välinge Innovation, has developed what they call 'hardened wood flooring' a category that bridges the gap between traditional hardwood and engineered alternatives.

At its heart, Woodura surface technology fuses a thin sheet of real wood veneer with a Välinge Compositenk wood core through a powder mix layer. This process fills the natural gaps within the wood while enhancing its appearance, creating a surface that's three times harder than traditional solid wood flooring, yet retains all the authentic beauty and uniqueness of real timber.

■ THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE INNOVATION

What makes Bjelin particularly interesting for residential applications is how it combines the visual appeal of hardwood with the practical advantages typically associated with premium laminate flooring.

Installation Simplicity: The leakproof 5G Dry locking system offers a waterproof fold-down installation that's remarkably straightforward – no glue, no mess, and suitable for DIY homeowners or professional installers alike. This single-action locking system works across all product widths and prevents water penetration at the joints, reducing the risk of moisture-related damage to the subfloor.

Durability: The hardened surface is significantly more resistant to wear and daily life than traditional wood floors – ideal for busy family homes, pets, and high-traffic areas like hallways and kitchens.

Water Resistance: Unlike conventional hardwood, the 5G Dry system provides genuine water resistance, addressing one of homeowners' primary concerns about wood flooring in busy and high use areas. Woodura technology creates a more water-resistant surface with an additional layer of moisture-resistant wood core.

■ SUSTAINABILITY MEETS STYLE

For environmentally conscious homeowners, Bjelin's approach is particularly appealing. The Woodura flooring process uses only a tenth of the timber normally required for traditional hardwood flooring, with all wood sourced from FSC-certified sustainable forests. The manufacturing process is more efficient and environmentally friendly than traditional methods, yet each plank retains the individuality and natural grain patterns that make real wood so desirable.

The range includes oak, ash and walnut in formats from Scandinavian-inspired whites and greys to traditional warmer tones and darker, characterful hues – offering the aesthetic versatility homeowners expect from premium flooring.

■ SIZE OPTIONS FOR EVERY SPACE

Bjelin now offers comprehensive sizing options to suit different rooms and installation preferences:

- Small panels (1170 x 151mm) – easy to transport and ideal for smaller rooms or DIY projects
- Medium panels (2000 x 151mm) – versatile for most residential spaces
- Large panels (2000 x 180mm) – creating a more expansive look
- XL (2200 x 206mm) and XXL (2378 x 271mm) – for dramatic, contemporary interiors with fewer joints

Surface finishes include Pro Matt Lacquer for easy maintenance, plus Brushed lacquer for a textured look and optimal comfort underfoot, with options in larger sizes for those seeking a more natural aesthetic.

■ THE VERDICT

For homeowners who want the warmth and authenticity of real wood without compromising on practical performance, Bjelin's hardened wood flooring represents a genuine innovation. It's not trying to imitate wood – it is wood – just engineered smarter for the way we actually live.

With proven technology from Välinge Innovation, whose patents underpin much of the world's click-flooring systems, backed by genuine sustainability credentials and increasing availability through distributors in both the UK and Ireland, Bjelin deserves serious consideration from anyone planning a residential flooring project.

www.bjelin.com





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