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TOMORROW'S®
CONTRACT FLOORS

| JANUARY 2026 |



Choosing the wrong adhesive can cause system failures – the NEW Recommended Adhesives Guide 2026, from F. Ball, removes that risk.

With around 6,000 tested and approved recommendations from nearly 200 leading manufacturers, it's the industry's most reliable resource for quickly selecting the correct adhesive, for any floorcovering installation, every time. **Tested, approved & guaranteed.**



RAG® 2026

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EDITOR'S VOICE



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

As we turn the page on a new year, I'm delighted to present our first issue of 2026. A new year brings fresh challenges and evolving expectations across the built environment, but it also offers an opportunity to reflect and look ahead with confidence. In this issue, we focus on practical insight, performance-led solutions and design inspiration to help set the tone for the year ahead.

Refurbishment takes centre stage this month as the sector continues to balance speed, sustainability and specification. Rob Russell of Bostik explores how instant adhesive solutions can keep renovation projects moving, while Forbo demonstrates the power of flooring-led design in creating bold and inspiring collaborative workplaces.

Healthcare and specialist environments remain firmly in the spotlight. Altro's Dave Ford outlines the critical demands placed on flooring in high-footfall public spaces, while Flowcrete explains how compliant flooring systems are supporting the UK pharmaceutical sector.

We also delve into the enduring appeal of classic interiors, with Select First examining the return of monochrome schemes, and Knot & Grain's Natalie Mudd sharing essential advice on caring for engineered wood flooring throughout the seasons.

Rounding out the issue, experts from F. Ball and Co. Ltd. highlight the importance of specialist adhesive selection when bringing complex vinyl designs to life.

Together, these features reflect an industry that is resilient, innovative and ready for what 2026 has in store.

Happy new year and I hope you enjoy the issue.

Sarah Robinson, Editor



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on Stopgap 300, 700 and on these Styccobond adhesives*



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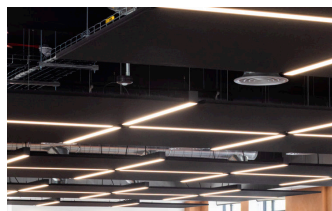
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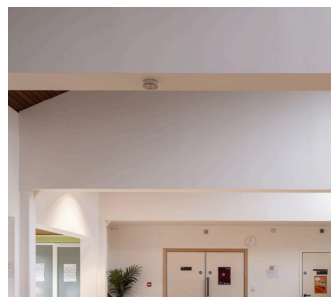




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THE POWER OF EVOLUTION

Bona Mega EVO – Faster, better and safer floor surfaces

Bona introduces Bona Mega EVO, the next generation 1K waterborne lacquer with a new state-of-the-art crosslinking technology that activates when applied. The unique, non-yellowing formula delivers faster curing with excellent resistance to scratches, wear, and chemicals. With VOC levels below 3%, the lacquer contributes to healthier working conditions with a lower impact on indoor air quality.

Try the new step for medium wear wood floors, try Bona Mega EVO!

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F. BALL REVEALS UPDATED RAG

F. Ball and Co. Ltd. has unveiled the latest print edition of its industry-leading Recommended Adhesives Guide (RAG), which sees new adhesives recommendations for floorcoverings launched by manufacturers over the past 12 months now added to the guide.

The RAG enables contractors and specifiers to quickly check the compatibility of F. Ball adhesives with over 6,000 branded floorcoverings from over 200 leading international floorcovering manufacturers – offering flooring professionals the most comprehensive guide to floorcovering-adhesive compatibility available.

Recommendations are only included in the guide after the completion of a rigorous 56-day testing programme conducted by F. Ball's Technical Service Department at state-of-the-art testing facilities and require a positive endorsement by the relevant floorcovering manufacturer. Furthermore, every recommendation listed guarantees the resulting bond performance for the

entire lifetime of the flooring installation – as long as the advised subfloor preparation and installation procedures are followed – giving flooring professionals complete peace of mind.

In addition to the annually updated A5 printed book, a continuously updated version of the guide is available on the F. Ball website, and as a mobile app, which is free to download from the Apple App store or Google Play. The app has emerged as a popular way to access the guide.

F. Ball's technical director, Neil Sanders, said: "It is always advisable to check the compatibility of adhesives and chosen floorcoverings to ensure against floor failure. The RAG remains the industry standard for this, making it effortless, with recommendations for any of the listed floorcoverings also available in an instant via the smartphone app."

Copies can be requested by e-mailing mail@f-ball.co.uk or calling 01538 361633.

www.f-ball.com



ARDEX GROUP WINS PRESTIGIOUS BASA AWARD FOR SUSTAINABILITY

ARDEX Group is proud to announce its success at the BASA Showcase 2025, where the company won the Best Sustainability Initiative.

The BASA Showcase, organised by the British Adhesives & Sealants Association, celebrates excellence and innovation across the industry.

The award recognises ARDEX Group's Building Tomorrow programme, which commits the company to achieving full Carbon Neutrality by 2045, and Carbon Neutrality for Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2030.

This ambitious strategy includes initiatives such as: replacing finite raw materials with circular solutions, reducing CO2 emissions across operations, promoting diversity, equality, and ethical business practices and prioritising local sourcing.

Earlier this year, ARDEX Group also received a Gold Certificate from the Achilles Carbon Reduction Programme, marking five consecutive years of CO2 reduction at its UK plants.

This BASA accolade follows another sustainability win at the Tile Association Awards 2025, making it the company's second major sustainability award this year.

In addition to the sustainability award, ARDEX Group was shortlisted in the Innovation category for its BAL Micromax Grout-Effect Sealant, and, as a manufacturer shortlisted for multiple awards, was also shortlisted in the Best Manufacturer category.

David Hackett, managing director at ARDEX UK and Building Adhesives, said: "Winning this award is a testament to our team's

unwavering commitment to sustainability and innovation.

"Our Building Tomorrow programme is not just a pledge – it's a roadmap to creating a greener, more responsible future for our industry. We are proud of what we've achieved so far and excited about the journey ahead."

<https://ardex.co.uk>



ALTRO'S LATEST SUSTAINABILITY REPORT PUBLISHED

Altro has published its latest sustainability report, providing a comprehensive overview of the company's ongoing commitment to sustainable practices, with an increased focus on transparency and accountability.

'Building Better Futures' contains detailed information on Altro's environmental impact and efforts to reduce carbon emissions; initiatives and programmes that promote social responsibility within its communities; innovations in sustainable product development and supply chain management; as well as key performance metrics and benchmarks that track the company's sustainability goals.

Richard Kahn, Altro's CEO, said: "Altro's commitment to innovation drives sustainable progress, transforming our products and processes to set new standards for environmental responsibility. Our holistic approach ensures that we are making a positive impact on the planet while delivering high-quality solutions to our customers.

"This report shows the progress and impact we all can make when we focus our efforts on the things that really matter, as well as the breadth and depth of the initiatives

underway across our global operations. For example, we've seen a phenomenal 90% reduction in Scope 2 emissions, with our operations in the UK, Germany, Sweden and Australia all contributing significantly. We are committed to transparency, providing detailed figures in this report, fully aware of the work still to do as well as all that's already achieved.

Sustainability manager David Lever commented: "This year's report shows some significant progress towards our sustainability goals, but also that there

will always be so much more to be done. Progress comes when we are transparent about and accountable for the impacts of our business – that's how we drive meaningful change. This report not only reflects our achievements but also identifies areas where we can improve and sets ambitious targets for the future."

Read Altro's 2025 sustainability report Building Better Futures: for the Planet, for People [here](https://www.altro.com/uk).

www.altro.com/uk



TOMORROW'S CONTRACT FLOORS AWARDS 2026 NOW OPEN FOR VOTING

We are delighted to announce that voting for the Tomorrow's Contract Floors Awards 2026 is now officially open.

Our annual awards celebrate the outstanding products and services shaping the contract flooring industry today. This year, we received an exceptional number of nominations, and the calibre of entries has once again raised the bar for innovation and industry excellence.

After careful review, we have compiled a shortlist of the Top 35 products and services that truly stand out. As always, selections were based on innovation, ease of installation, safety, style, and sustainability. From cutting-edge developments in adhesives and subfloor preparation to advances in flooring design and circular-economy solutions, every corner of the sector is represented.

Now it's over to you. Cast your vote for the product or service you believe deserves to be recognised for its contribution to the industry. Our Awards Guide includes links to the public poll, which will remain open

until Monday 9 March 2026. The Top 10 will be revealed in our April issue, and the Top Three winners will be presented with their trophies later in the year.

Editor Sarah Robinson said: "Every year, the awards show just how dynamic our industry is, but 2026 has delivered one of

the strongest shortlists we've ever seen. I'm excited to shine a spotlight on these exceptional innovations and to celebrate the people behind them."

See the Guide here and vote your favourite product.



KBI UK SUPPORTS COMPLETION OF MND CENTRE

Barnsley-based porous surfacing specialist KBI UK has supported the Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease at Seacroft Hospital, Leeds, installing high-quality resin-bound surfacing at cost. Prince William officially opened the centre on 20 November.

Commissioned under principal contractor I&G Ltd and designed by Leeds-based landscape architects Re-Form, the centre's external areas were completed with 440m² of durable resin-bound surfacing in elegant Evening Rose, supplied by KBI's long-term material partner, Vuba.

KBI's installation team installed surfacing to both the north elevation, providing accessible pathways at the main entrance, and the south elevation, which includes a sensory garden and walk-through space for patients and families. The project reflects a shared commitment to creating welcoming, inclusive, and sustainable environments across all areas of the new facility.

Approached by Re-Form to support the build on a charitable basis, KBI responded without hesitation. The work was carried out by a dedicated team of five, including Anthony Irvine, a former KBI project manager and current strategic partner, who previously played rugby alongside Rob Burrow at Leeds.

Graham Pell, managing director of KBI UK, said: "This project means a lot to us on both a personal and professional level. It's a privilege to have contributed to such a vital and compassionate space. We're grateful to Re-Form and I&G for involving us, and proud to support the legacy of a centre that will bring comfort, care, and community to so many."

The Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease is named in honour of the late Leeds Rhinos legend, whose high-profile advocacy, courage in sharing his diagnosis

and determination to improve care for others, sparked the national fundraising effort that turned his vision into reality.

Commissioned by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, the centre brings a wide range of valuable MND services under one roof. Funded through Leeds Hospitals Charity's £6.8m appeal, the centre includes clinical treatment areas, research space, and quiet outdoor zones to enhance patient wellbeing.

www.kbiuk.co.uk



THE TIMELESS ELEGANCE OF MAYFAIR

Causeway Carpets has launched Mayfair, a wool carpet crafted to reflect British design sensibilities.

Crafted from 100% pure new wool in a resilient four-ply yarn, Mayfair is an exquisite loop pile carpet from Causeway Carpets. Featuring as one of the naturally beautiful and durable carpet ranges in The Natura Collection, Mayfair is a perfect blend of style, texture and natural materials.

Recognising the uniqueness of British design sensibilities, this new carpet comes in 50 refined and elegant colourways in the four styles of Mayfair Rib, Mayfair Linea, Mayfair Weave and Mayfair Texture. Each offers an exquisitely crafted floorcovering to enhance classic and modern interiors alike and bring homes a luxury touch.

Causeway Carpets commercial director Richard Moore said: 'The Natura Collection celebrates the beauty of natural fibre in

carpets that are exceptional value. With the addition of Mayfair, we are expanding the collection with more options for today's homes and fulfilling our promise to bring quality independent retailers the best in luxurious carpeting crafted with care."

Using a heavyweight four-ply yarn, Mayfair's textures are not only beautiful but also enduring, more than enough to withstand years of use in living areas. And with wool's natural resilience, Mayfair's textures will stay defined and elegant throughout.

Made by Lusotuf in Portugal, Mayfair comes with a 10-year wear warranty and is available in both four and five metre widths. Sampling of the range is available for Causeway Carpets new-look Compact Display Unit and Multi Display Unit.

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

www.causewaycarpets.com



AN IMPRESSIVE APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY

Quick-Step's new Impressive collection and world-first recycling technology are leading the way in sustainability within the flooring industry.

With a lifetime warranty, 100% waterproof construction and an ultra-resistant top layer, the enduring quality of Quick-Step's new Impressive and Impressive Design laminate floors means homeowners will probably never have to worry about replacing their floor, but have you ever thought, 'what if'?

Quick-Step thinks about this question all the time. That's why it's taken every possible step to consider how laminate floors are made and what happens to them when it comes time to change. Through thinking responsibly, Quick-Step has carved a path for a floor that's more sustainable in more ways than one.

Impressive and Impressive Design, like every Quick-Step laminate floor, are made with 80% wood, 'locking in' carbon throughout their life. In fact, just one Impressive plank stores 2.5kg of CO₂, that's the same as charging a smartphone more than a thousand times.

The core of laminate is made with a HDF (high density fibreboard) that features 100% recovered wood. For this, Quick-Step stays close to its roots and turns someone's trash into treasure: recovered wood is a by-product from sawmills, forest management processes and roadside maintenance.

When it invented the patented Uniclic joint in 1997, Quick-Step imagined a world of easy DIY installation for laminate floors,

but Uniclic's glueless installation also brought other happy advantages, many of which are more appreciated today than ever before.

Thanks to Uniclic and Unizip any damaged planks can easily be replaced without having to lift the whole floor. This repair over replace mentality also extends to Quick-Step repair kits and easy-to-follow videos: everyone should be able to make their floor last as long as possible.

When the time does come to replace Impressive or Impressive Design, the glueless installation means easier recycling. With click installation there's no contamination to the floor itself, so it can be cleanly (and easily) recovered. Up until now that has been a moot point, as it wasn't possible to recycle laminate. However, in another world first, Quick-Step has now made it possible to fully recycle laminate flooring.

The pioneering new technology takes old HDF and turns it into raw material to produce new HDF to be used in laminate floors. Thanks to today's investments, Quick-Step will be able to incorporate up to 20% recycled content in its laminate floors by 2030. This is true floor to floor recycling in action.

Quick-Step's responsible approach to making laminate floors is rooted in a floor that lasts a lifetime, but should it ever need to be recycled, it has a way to do that too. So, next time you're thinking about buying a new floor ask, 'what if?' and think about how your choice of laminate flooring can always be a step ahead. Quick-Step laminate is not just a floor: it's a future-proof choice.

www.quick-step.co.uk



BEAUFLOR BRINGS AFFORDABLE FLOORS TO RAISE STANDARDS IN SOCIAL HOUSING

Beauflor sheet vinyl flooring ensures that social housing providers can improve the standard of housing while meeting quality and value objectives.

Today's social housing providers are focused on the need to deliver tenants a good standard of housing and with floorcoverings proven to be beneficial to the wellbeing of tenants, ensuring adequate coverings in all rooms can contribute to that focus. However, with concerns over cost and health and safety worries from poor quality coverings, many tenants still endure moving into properties without floorcoverings in rooms where they are not required by relevant standards, facing living in poor conditions or taking on debt to improve their home.

The impact on wellbeing is significant, as one social housing tenant reveals: "I have repaired every room including the stairs. I have filled in, sanded, removed dangers and scraped what I can... and covered over what I can't. I am forever grateful for our home, but I was shocked at the lack of basic necessity and safety when it came to the floors. I am too embarrassed to let visitors in or let the children have playmates to socialise. The stress affects us all. Especially when I see them hurt themselves and I have to tell them not to walk in certain areas of each room."

There is an answer for providers looking to improve the quality of homes: affordable sheet vinyl flooring from Beauflor. Sheet

vinyl flooring provides excellent value and is also easy and cost-efficient to install. It can often be fitted over existing substrates with minimal preparation time, while glue-free options further lower initial financial outlay. With a long service life, it also can often last between tenancies, while its resilience against wear and water ingress means fewer repairs and less frequent replacement.

For tenants, the use of Beauflor sheet vinyl can be profound. Its homelike wood, tile and uni designs create a welcoming ambience, while its comfortable feel, warmth and acoustic properties help to support wellbeing. As it's easy to look after with regular vacuuming and mopping, it also assists tenants in keeping it in good condition. Because it covers bare floors and is certified for low VOC emissions, it also contributes to better indoor air quality for a happier and healthier home.

Beauflor offers a wide range of sheet vinyl flooring suitable for new build and refurbishment in social housing. With options for both private and public areas, selected Beauflor sheet vinyl floors are also available with a textile backing that can eliminate glue and subfloor preparation from installation, offering further cost advantage. The clean uplift of these floors also means they are easier to remove when replacement is needed.

www.beauflor.com



COUNTER THE CRISIS WITH LEOLINE

As the cost-of-living crisis shows little sign of waning and homeowners continue to look at ways of saving money, that expensive new plank or tile floor may well need to be reconsidered. But with LeoLine cushion vinyl, homes can still get the look they love without the expense.

Making beautiful flooring designs wonderfully accessible is LeoLine's strength. Not only cost-effective to buy but also simple to install, LeoLine is the easy and affordable way to a great looking floor. With herringbone and chevron wood to luxurious limestone, polished concrete and colourful terrazzo, LeoLine is home to every look imaginable.

Every LeoLine look shares the same easy maintenance, so no matter what their 'dream' floor, homeowners not only benefit from a floor that looks just the ticket, but one that's also a joy to live with. No more worries about water, no special cleaners, top-ups, treatments or waxes; just regular vacuuming and mopping is all that's required to keep that special look in tip-top condition.

For retailers, LeoLine's speed and ease of installation means keener fitting prices. LeoLine can be installed in most domestic rooms without glue, it's fast-to-lay sheet format simply cut to fit. And textile-backed ranges Comfytex PU and Comfytex Deluxe Max can be installed on top of existing floors for an even more cost-effective fitting quote.

David Wray, UK sales manager residential, said: "There's no doubt everyone is feeling the squeeze and looking to shop more wisely. When it comes to buying a new floor on a budget, there are few better choices than LeoLine. Our collections are affordable to buy in even the most unique of looks and come with a range of benefits including fast and simple installation, easy maintenance, great comfort and warmth underfoot. What's more, they are made in Europe to last for years of blissful living in every type and style of home."

LeoLine free-of-charge samples can be ordered through the website and a display is available for retailers looking to carry the full range in store.

leoline.co.uk



IVC COMMERCIAL LAUNCHES DEDICATED HOUSING WEBSITE

Contractors and providers can now find IVC Commercial's dedicated housing floors on a new website, ivc-floorsforhousing.co.uk, making it easy to find affordable sheet vinyl floors for living areas and public use.

Featuring its dedicated social and affordable housing ranges for private areas in Zenura Style, Zenura Luxe, Zenura Ultimate and Zenura Elegance LVS, as well as the Isafe 70 and Pioneer 70 heavy-duty ranges; the website gives instant access to high-quality sheet vinyl flooring made in Europe. Users can also see the benefits of using sheet vinyl in social and affordable housing, and how it can help to raise the standard of housing provision.

IVC Commercial national sales manager Jake Parks said: "Alongside our well-established heavy duty floors for commercial use, we've developed the Zenura ranges of quality cushion sheet vinyl floors that provide living areas with suitable flooring options. Ready for both new build and refurbishment projects in social housing, these UK-exclusive ranges are cost-effective and specifically designed for home environments. This means that contractors and social housing providers can deliver a considered flooring specification that upholds long-term

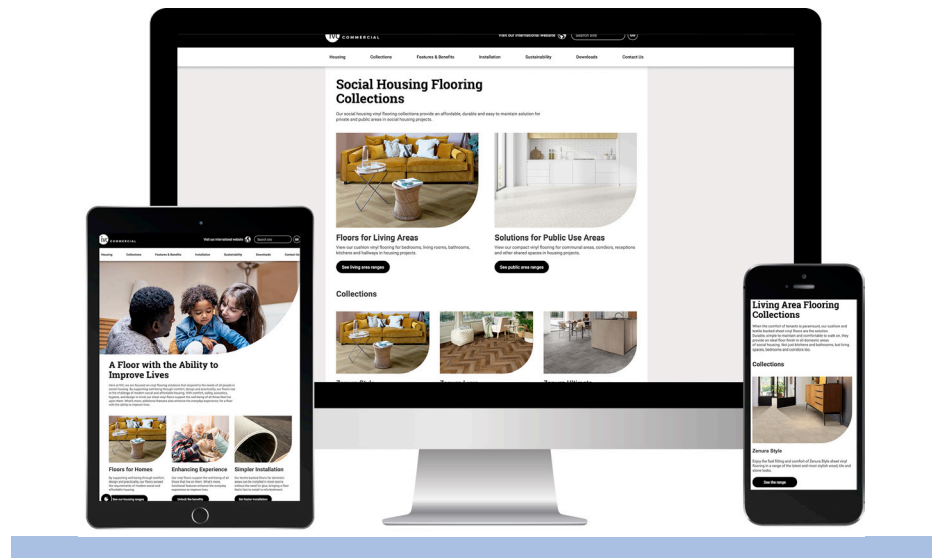
value and which has the quality of IVC Commercial at its heart."

The Zenura ranges not only feature homelike designs, but also add comfort, warmth and quiet to social and affordable homes. They can be specified in domestic areas alongside IVC Commercial's Isafe 70 and Pioneer 70 ranges in public areas to deliver a flooring specification that meets budgetary and performance requirements,

while improving standards of housing for people in need.

With a growing number of providers looking to improve the quality of housing outside of obligatory standards, ivc-floorsforhousing.co.uk unlocks the potential of sheet vinyl flooring to support the emotional and physical wellbeing and financial status of tenants otherwise faced with bare floors.

www.ivc-commercial.com



NEW YEAR. NEW LAYRED

Waterproof, stylish and with the performance and comfort for everywhere in the home, Moduleo LayRed is the future of engineered vinyl flooring.

The original LayRed made it easy to enjoy a great looking floor, but Moduleo's engineers and designers have made the new generation even better.

Now with uprated performance and a more natural effect in fresh wood and tile designs, Moduleo LayRed raises the bar once again. It is also a little kinder on the planet too, thanks to 22% pre-consumer recycled content from Moduleo's very own recycling facility.

This latest generation of vinyl flooring has a surface that's inspired by the hydrophobic qualities of the lotus leaf, repelling water for a floor that's 100% waterproof. Along with the precision of LayRed's Uniclic click joint, there's simply nowhere for water to go making LayRed the perfect floor for kitchens, bathrooms and basements.

But the innovation doesn't stop with LayRed's 100% waterproof surface, Moduleo's new barrier layer cuts down on micro-scratches – a telltale sign of inferiority – and makes maintenance of this premium floor even easier. Drop something? Simply wipe away and forget, LayRed is the end of frantic scrubbing and dabbing to soak up spills. In fact, its resilience makes it the perfect floor for retailers to offer families and their four-legged friends.

Not only does this barrier layer fight off the comings and goings of life, but it also allows for variety in gloss levels without affecting LayRed's ultra-matt look, bringing the soothing beauty of nature without the expense or upkeep. A floor that looks just like the real thing, but one that's tough

enough to survive the rigours of a busy family home.

Yet despite its toughness, this is a floor that's engineered to bring comfort, quiet (up to 21dB in fact) and warmth. Moduleo has fine-tuned LayRed's multi-layer construction to eliminate many of the drawbacks of real wood or stone floors. No more hard wood and noisy tiles, just softness and warmth beneath your feet; exactly what's needed for a floor which adds all-day comfort to your home.

Of course, living with LayRed is one thing, but what about installation? Well, LayRed has that covered too. While fitting

a natural floor can be noisy, smelly and messy, LayRed's integrated underlay and Uniclic fitting make installing speedy, simple and noise and dust free. Perfect for instant home makeovers and refreshes, it can even be laid on top of your old floor.

The new generation of Moduleo LayRed is vinyl flooring made for retailers looking for the ultimate, go-anywhere floor to offer their customers.

Retailers are asked to contact their local Unilin sales representative for more details.

www.moduleo.com



DESIGNER CONTRACTS STEPS IN TO HELP SAVE HOSPICE BEDS

Peter Kelsey, md and owner of Chesterfield-based Designer Contracts, has donated £50,000 to the Ashgate Hospice 'Save a Precious Bed' appeal.

It represents a significant contribution towards the hospice's aim of raising £244,000 to keep two beds open for six months, helping around 25 patients.

Peter said: "We have long supported Ashgate Hospice which is currently facing

an acute financial crisis following a £2.6m shortfall in NHS funding. The hospice provides a vital service to the whole of the North Derbyshire area and relies heavily on donations and fundraising."

Ashgate recently announced proposals to reduce inpatient beds further and make changes to services and team structures because of the scale of its funding gap. The appeal aims to protect specialist inpatient care at a time when the hospice is having to consider the most difficult decisions in its history.

Jack Wood, director of income generation for Ashgate, said: "At a time that has been the hardest in Ashgate's history, Peter Kelsey's incredible £50,000 pledge to our appeal is a truly remarkable act of generosity.

"Alongside the support from so many other people and organisations, it is helping us protect the specialist inpatient care that thousands of people across North Derbyshire rely on."

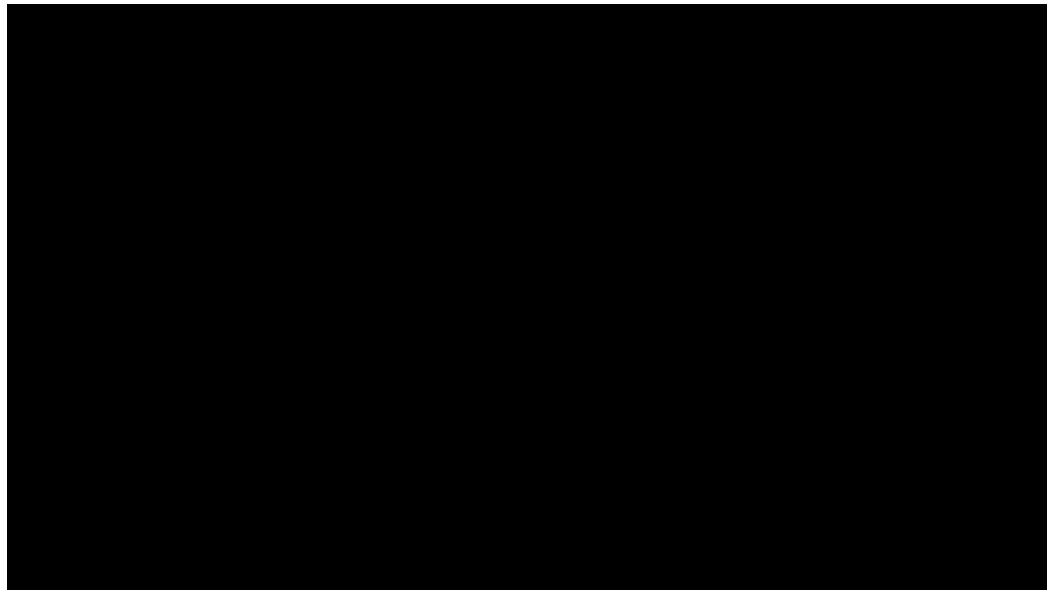
For more information about the Ashgate Hospice appeal, click [here](#).

HANDLING THE HEAT

F. Ball technical service officer Chris McQuade advises on installing floorcoverings where underfloor heating is present.

Flooring installations where underfloor heating is present are frequently a source of questions that we receive from flooring contractors, in particular 'what smoothing compound should I apply to create a smooth base for floorcoverings?' and 'what adhesives can I use?'.

All F. Ball smoothing compounds and adhesives are suitable for application over underfloor heating systems that are contained within a screeded subfloor. It is just recommended that systems are turned off 48 hours before the installation of floorcoverings, during and 48 hours after.



The issue comes when working over retrofit electrical wired or water-fed underfloor heating systems that are increasingly installed over subfloors as part of new build or refurbishment projects. In these situations, it is advisable to allow between 5 – 35mm of a smoothing compound above the pipes (less for electrical wired systems), depending on the type of system being installed and the manufacturer's instructions. It must be remembered that some systems are not designed to receive a smoothing compound but laminate flooring or ceramic tiles.

■ NEW DEVELOPMENT

This has led F. Ball to launch Stopgap 1600, a new fast-drying, fibre-reinforced smoothing compound that is formulated especially to encapsulate underfloor heating systems.

The product is suitable for use over a wide range of absorbent and non-absorbent subfloors, including sand/cement screed, tile backer boards, concrete, plywood, granolithic, terrazzo, epoxy and polyurethane resins, ceramic and quarry tiles, as well as Stopgap waterproof surface membranes. It can be applied between 3 – 40mm thick installed over internal subfloors in both domestic and commercial environments, and is walk-on hard from three hours after application and ready to receive floorcoverings in as little as 12 hours.

■ ADHESIVE SELECTION

The availability of temperature tolerant adhesives, for installing resilient floorcoverings in areas where temperatures have the potential to rise significantly, raises questions about exactly when and where they need to be used. There is some confusion about why a temperature tolerant adhesive is required to install LVTs in conservatories, for example, but they are not necessary over underfloor heating.

Extreme temperatures or temperature fluctuations can cause vinyl floorcoverings to expand and contract significantly. This is frequently the case in heavily glazed areas that are subject to solar gain during the day, such as conservatories, which then

rapidly cool at night. Over time, this can lead to unsightly tenting and gapping at the edges of floorcoverings, particularly between adjacent vinyl tiles or planks. When the bond has fully matured, temperature tolerant adhesives hold floorcoverings firmly in place in these environments, restricting these movements and ensuring the long-lasting performance of installations.

■ TEMPERATURE CHANGES

Temperature fluctuations as a result of underfloor heating systems are much more gradual and less extreme than changes in temperature resulting from solar gain, which can be much more sudden and range up to +60C. To meet British Standard guidelines of resilient and textile floorcoverings, underfloor heating systems should not exceed 27C at the bond line. Temperature tolerant adhesives are therefore only necessary where there are heavily glazed areas, including conservatories and areas with floor-to-ceiling windows. F. Ball's full range of adhesives can be used over all kinds of encapsulated underfloor heating.

Where a temperature tolerant adhesive is required, there are a number to choose from, including ones with extra features, such as pressure sensitive characteristics.

For more advice on working over underfloor heating and what adhesive to use in a particular situation, F. Ball's technical service department are on hand during normal working hours to answer your questions. Guidance on floorcovering-adhesive compatibility can also be found in F. Ball's Recommended Adhesives Guide (RAG), which lists the compatibility of F. Ball adhesives with over 6,000 branded floorcoverings from over 200 leading international floorcovering manufacturers. In addition to an A5 printed book, a constantly updated version of the guide is available on the F. Ball website, and as a mobile app, which is free to download from the Apple App store or Google Play.

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

THE OPTIMUM CHOICE

Choosing the right adhesive for a particular project can not just help make flooring installations look their best but make the process of installing floorcoverings easier. Chris McQuade, Technical Service Officer at F. Ball and Co. Ltd., advises on selecting the optimum formulation for a flooring installation, including checking the compatibility of particular floorcoverings and adhesives.



The drive to help flooring contractors work to ever higher standards, with greater speed and efficiency, as well as increase the longevity of flooring installations, has led to the development of high-performance adhesives with a range of specialist properties.

For this reason, when it comes to selecting an adhesive for an installation, it is always advisable to consider products that have been developed for particular applications and types of floorcoverings.

Adhesive selection should be based on the details of an individual flooring installation, including the properties required for ease of installation and the conditions to which the adhesive will be exposed. It is always advisable that contractors check the compatibility of adhesives and particular floorcoverings.

■ VINYL FLOORCOVERINGS

Vinyl adhesives are available with a range of features, including pressure sensitive characteristics, temperature tolerance and moisture resistance.

While wet-lay adhesives are fine where an immediate bond is not required, the instant grab and long open time of pressure sensitive adhesives, stopping floorcoverings sliding about and

allowing them to be repositioned, means that they are often the best choice for installing vinyl tiles or planks.

Hybrid adhesive technology has enabled the development of pressure sensitive adhesives with a range of additional features, such as F. Ball's Styccobond F49 Hybrid PS, which is resistant to water, making it suitable for installing LVTs in damp and humid environments. The water-based adhesive also develops the extremely high bond strength to hold floorcoverings in place in areas exposed to extreme temperature fluctuations (from -20°C to +60°C).

■ TEXTILE FLOORCOVERINGS

When installing carpet over large areas that will be subject to heavy use, such as hotel corridors and events venues, contractors will typically require an adhesive that will develop a high bond strength to hold floorcoverings firmly in place over the lifetime of an installation. However, carpet and underlay installed with this kind of adhesive will require mechanical removal when they need replacing.

For this reason, dual-bond systems have been developed, utilising adhesives that dry to form a transparent, permanently tacky coating to prevent underlay moving laterally when subject to normal foot traffic but allow them to be easily lifted without

damaging the subfloor. Carpet can then be adhered to the underlay using a specialist adhesive for textile floorcoverings that will develop the high bond strength required to enable the installation to withstand expected levels of wear.

■ CARPET TILE TACKIFIERS

Loose-lay carpet tiles are often specified in schools, offices and other commercial premises because they can be individually lifted and replaced if they become damaged, worn or stained, an advantage in offices with chairs on castors or busy walkways, for example.

For this to be possible, flooring contractors will need to install the carpet tiles with a carpet tile tackifier that does not create a permanent bond. Carpet tile tackifiers ensure that carpet tiles are held firmly in place when subject to lateral movements, including everyday foot traffic and equipment being wheeled around, while allowing them to be easily lifted vertically if they need to be replaced at a later date.

■ RUBBER AND LINOLEUM

The strong initial tack and high bond strength of specialist rubber floorcovering adhesives make them ideal for securing a wide range of rubber sheet and tile floorcoverings. Such adhesives have a high film strength to provide good dimensional stability and prevent the rubber floorcovering from moving when subject to heavy traffic.

To be able to adhere hessian-backed linoleum floorcoverings, an adhesive must be able to 'wet out' the backing (i.e. transfer enough adhesive to create a good bond and deliver the instant grab that reduces the sliding of the linoleum when being installed).

■ WOOD

Utilising the latest technology, flexible wood floor adhesives provide an elastic but strong bond, which will accommodate

natural movement of wood blocks or planks over the lifetime of an installation, ensuring a long lasting, visually attractive floor finish.

■ COMPATIBILITY CHECK

Finally, it is highly recommended that contractors always check the compatibility of particular floorcoverings and adhesives. To do this, you can consult the floorcovering manufacturer's guidelines. Alternatively, F. Ball produces a Recommended Adhesives Guide (RAG®), enables contractors and specifiers to quickly check the compatibility of F. Ball adhesives with over 6,000 branded floorcoverings from over 200 leading international floorcovering manufacturers.

Recommendations are only included in the guide after the completion of a rigorous 56-day testing programme at F. Ball's state-of-the-art testing facilities and subject to endorsement by the relevant floorcovering manufacturer. Furthermore, every recommendation listed guarantees the resulting bond performance for the entire lifetime of the flooring installation – as long as the advised subfloor preparation and installation procedures are followed – giving flooring professionals peace of mind.

A constantly updated version of the RAG® is available on the F. Ball website and as a mobile app, which is free to download from the Apple App store or Google Play, allowing contractors to consult the trusted guide for advice on floorcovering-adhesive compatibility via the smartphone in their pocket at any time.

The 2026 printed edition of the guide is also now available, and free copies can be requested by e-mailing mail@f-ball.co.uk or calling 01538 361633.

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



READY TO ROLL

Rob Russell, technical consultant at Bostik, explains how to transform renovation projects with an instant adhesive solution.

Flooring renovation projects require a high-quality installation combined with a fast turnaround. So, having the right tools for the job is critical to ensuring these types of projects run smoothly.

This article will outline how Bostik ROLL, a reinforced, solvent-free adhesive tape, can form part of the flooring toolkit to provide support for fast installations.

■ SPEED WITHOUT SACRIFICING PERFORMANCE

Time is often of the essence with flooring renovation projects. Usually, the project cannot be handed back to the main contractor or client for further works until the flooring is complete. That's where Bostik ROLL comes in. As the adhesive on the roll is dry, there's no curing time, meaning no waiting around, and the area remains free from any overspill. This makes it ideal for use in sensitive areas, such as healthcare settings.

Supplied in ready-to-use rolls in 25mm, 50mm, 85mm and 240mm widths, Bostik ROLL is a solvent-free solution ideal for use in residential or commercial areas.

It's a convenient option for the installation of skirting, capping strips, cove formers, and other accessories, plus larger applications such as vinyl on stairways if the larger 240mm size is used.

■ A COMPLEMENT TO TRADITIONAL ADHESIVE SOLUTIONS

Traditional water and solvent-based flooring adhesives have their place and are indispensable on most renovations. However, where a refurbishment needs to be completed quickly, every opportunity to save time counts. Using a dry adhesive tape, like

Bostik ROLL, for suitable details and accessories removes the need to allow for open time and drying time.

In addition, when working in residential or commercial spaces where lots of people will be present, odours and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) may be a concern. While many Bostik adhesives offer very low VOCs, it can be beneficial to opt for a solution like Bostik ROLL, which is solvent-free with very low VOC emissions, helping to minimise odour and disruption on site.

By choosing a dry adhesive, such as Bostik ROLL, flooring accessories or even vinyl on stairs can be installed straight away, without compromise to the bond performance. This helps areas to be reopened sooner, reducing the overall turnaround time of the project.

■ MINIMISE DISRUPTION IN RENOVATIONS

One of the most difficult situations a flooring contractor will face is carrying out refurbishment work while a building remains in use.

In offices, schools or healthcare settings, it is rarely feasible to close an entire building when only one room, corridor or stairwell is being refurbished. Some disruption will always be unavoidable, but selecting a ready-to-use, dry adhesive where appropriate can help keep that disruption to a minimum.

Bostik ROLL is safe to use in occupied buildings, thanks to its EC1 Plus classification for very low VOC emissions. With an instant bond, the adhesive tape removes open time, drying time and on-site mixing, helping to keep sites cleaner and simpler to manage. Once the floorcovering or accessory is installed, the area can be returned to service without delay.

There's a lot to consider when taking on a refurbishment. But making the switch to Bostik ROLL for suitable applications is a straightforward way to save time and minimise disruption, provided that the subfloor or background is sound, level, clean, dry and suitable for a dry adhesive tape. A thorough assessment of the existing substrate should always come first. If in doubt, Bostik has an expert technical team on-hand to assist with product guidance and support.

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TEAM SPIRIT

Forbo's flooring designs provide the key for a vibrant new office space.

When ABM Alliance, an events planning company, looked to refurbish a former ambulance station into its new Bristol city centre offices, they tasked Kerr Office Group with the job. With the aim of creating a bold and inspiring space, Kerr Office Group specified Forbo Flooring Systems' Allura Flex Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT) flooring and Tessera Accord carpet tiles, favouring its varied palette and portfolio.

With over 40 years' experience organising and running B2B events, ABM Alliance is an expert in event planning and creating strong partnerships between brands. Presented with the opportunity to upgrade its office spaces, ABM Alliance has moved to a brand-

new location in Jubilee Hall, at the heart of Bristol's historic harbourside.

Speaking on these refurbishments, Angela Tedder, senior technical designer at Kerr Office Group, said: "The new space was incredibly large, extending to over 4,500 sq ft and it needed a complete refurbishment. The team had an idea in mind for how they wanted the space to look, playing on Jubilee Hall's character, while still providing a collaborative and sociable environment that matched their team spirit. However, due to the building's architectural history – once being an ambulance station – we knew that applying this design would be complex.

"We felt that pattern and colour was going to be key for this space. With ABM Alliance having a really strong and vibrant orange branding, we wanted to incorporate this where possible, all without detracting from the building's natural charm. This is why we looked to specify Forbo floorcoverings, with the supplier offering a wide range of colourways for us to choose from."



The Kerr Office Group team specified a combination of Forbo's Tessera Accord carpet tiles and Allura Flex vinyl flooring across each floor of the office space. Angela said: "We looked to Forbo for both functional and design reasons. The Tessera Accord carpet tiles are of great quality and helped to create a neutral backdrop for the wider working spaces, with the Magic Carpet colourway complementing the different tones we used in those areas. With 24dB impact sound reduction, Tessera Accord is ideal for offices, helping to reduce impact sound and offer a comfortable underfoot feeling. It also contains 61% recycled content by mass, helping to make the interior more sustainable.

"We also specified Forbo's Allura Flex LVT planks flooring in both the 0.55mm and 1.0mm wear layer formats. The thinner construction of the 0.55 product was the same height as the carpet tiles, allowing us to create a seamless transition between the two products. The 1.0 version allowed us to add a more durable finish to some of the other social and breakout spaces, where more footfall was expected. The Amber Elegant Oak design again worked well against the orange ABM Alliance

branding to brighten up the space, without overpowering the wider design. We had this fitted in a basket weave style pattern, helping to break it up and create a more unique aesthetic."

With work beginning in March 2025 and concluding in June, the fit-out has been well received by the ABM Alliance team. Jack Thompson, co-CEO and co-founder of ABM Alliance, commented: "Angela and the design team took great care to understand our vision and needs. They created a perfect balance between maintaining the building's historical charm, integrating our vision and turning that into an incredible working environment.

"The final result is a space that is both functional and aesthetically striking, combining our open-plan areas with private workspaces and meeting rooms, all bathed in natural light. The use of modern materials, paired with the preservation of architectural elements such as the exposed brick, creates a stunning environment where form and function meet. Never did I believe the prospective digital visual impressions would be actual real-life impressions, but they were."

www.forbo.com





SEAMLESS SWITCH

Matrix 70 loose lay vinyl wins through at Innovation Centre.

In an award-winning project, Moduleo Matrix 70 loose lay vinyl from Unilin Flooring has been chosen for the BAT Innovation Centre in Southampton.

The BAT Innovation Centre in Southampton is a state-of-the-art facility for the development of smokeless products at the company's global research and development headquarters. For the centre's reception and thoroughfares, the original design specification opted for a stone-effect ceramic tile.

However, understanding the complexity and cost off install would have on both budget and time, the project's appointed flooring contractor Tyrrell Flooring was tasked to recommend a solution that would retain the stone aesthetic, durability and simple maintenance of the ceramic tile originally specified, but that would offer cost and installation benefits.

After reviewing options from a number of brands, Tyrrell Flooring opted for Unilin Flooring's Moduleo Matrix 70 loose lay vinyl tile as the solution, chosen for its premium looks and excellent performance attributes. This hardwearing, scratch and stain resistant vinyl floor is quick to install in exactly the same way as the adjoining carpet tiles to achieve a level finish. Installed

without permanent bond to the subfloor, it is also easy to lift and replace if damaged or during refurbishment.

Kate Rushworth, Tyrrell Flooring, explains: "The original design proposal included a ceramic tile, so it was important that any alternative would not compromise the interior's final look and feel. Therefore, we searched options from well-known LVT brands to find the perfect solution. In the end, we recommended Unilin Flooring's Matrix 70 as the winning floor. Made for high traffic environments, we knew it would deliver the performance and maintenance needed for receptions and thoroughfares, letting us confidently recommend its Ceramic 4968 design as the right alternative."

"Installed without permanent bond to the subfloor, Matrix 70 is easy to lift and replace if damaged or during refurbishment."

Matrix 70 Ceramic 4698 brings a smart ceramic concrete look that met the original design brief, with all the advantages of loose lay vinyl flooring. The hassle-free flooring minimises installation time and keeps subfloors intact, making it ideal for multi-flooring commercial projects where textile and smooth finishes are used together. A total of 605m² of Unilin Flooring's Moduleo Matrix 70 floor was installed by Tyrrell Flooring in the BAT Innovation Centre.

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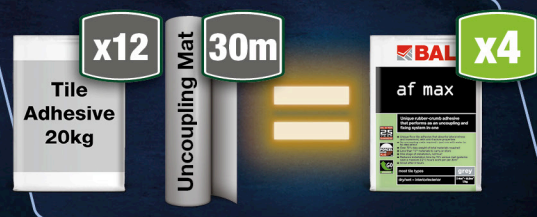


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WOOD WISDOM

Here, Natalie Mudd, co-founder and creative director of Knot & Grain, shares her top tips on how to keep engineered wood flooring looking its best through every season.



Stylish, durable and full of character, engineered wood flooring is the perfect choice for any home, from a traditional country cottage to a sleek modern apartment.

Like many parts of the home, it does require some maintenance to stay in great condition, extending its life and keeping floors looking their best year after year and throughout the changing seasons.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OIL AND LACQUER FINISH?

At Knot & Grain, we offer three finish options for your floors: oil, matt oil and lacquer. Whether you prefer the glossy sheen of oil, the understated look of matt oil or the subtle shine of lacquer, all choices are fantastic for protecting your beautiful wood flooring. Remember, each option has its unique style, durability, and care needs, so you can choose the perfect one to match your life and style preferences.

Think of an oil finish as a way to enhance the natural beauty of your wood. It sinks in to highlight the grain and rich colour, resulting in a warm, glossy finish that looks very similar to untouched wood and feels incredibly tactile. Over time, an oiled floor often develops a characterful patina, adding to its charm. A matt oil finish has all the properties of an oil finish, but with less shine, ideal for those who prefer a minimal and less glossy look.

Lacquer, on the other hand, forms a protective layer on the surface of the wood, giving it a smooth finish. It provides a more uniform, modern look and highlights the wood's colour, though it doesn't emphasise the grain quite as much as oil does.

HOW DO I REPAIR SCRATCHES IN WOOD FLOORING?

Whether it's scrapes from furniture or scratches from paws, it is inevitable that engineered wood flooring will show signs of wear and tear over time.

One of the advantages of oiled floors is that they can be easily touched up; minor scratches and scrapes can be corrected by lightly sanding the affected area and reapplying a fresh coat of oil. It's fuss-free and keeps the floor looking good long-term.

Lacquered floors can be a little trickier when it comes to repairs. Scratches can be more noticeable due to the contrast with the surrounding finish. Spot repairs are often difficult to blend seamlessly, and for more significant damage, you may need to sand and refinish the whole area to get everything looking even again.





■ HOW DO I CLEAN ENGINEERED WOOD FLOORING?

Like all flooring, engineered wood requires maintenance to keep it looking its best. Oiled floors need a little more regular upkeep. That means reapplying oil every so often, how often depends on how much foot traffic your floor sees. Day-to-day cleaning is straightforward; a quick sweep or vacuum does the trick, with the occasional wipe-down using a cleaner specially made for oiled wood.

Lacquered floors are generally easier to clean; a sweep with a damp (never wet!) mop is usually sufficient. While they don't require regular re-application like oil, they will eventually show signs of wear and tear and may need refinishing after several years, depending on usage.

<https://knotandgrain.com>



PERFORMANCE UNDER PRESSURE

Dave Ford, Altro's specifications manager for the north, explores the critical factors to consider when selecting flooring materials for public areas that experience heavy footfall, such as healthcare facilities.



When it comes to specifying flooring for public areas with heavy footfall, there is a greater need than ever for durable, easy to clean and attractive surfaces – and thankfully plenty of smart solutions to meet those demands.

Specifiers have a lot to balance, but probably top of that list has to be safety. Different environments demand different solutions to keep people safe, but deciding what flooring you need doesn't need to be complicated. It's all down to the contaminants present in your environment, as it's contaminants that determine the level of slip risk.

For example, if you've ever been to a busy shopping centre when it's been raining outside – wet shoes and dripping umbrellas can make the floor slippery. Likewise, there's potential for wet floors in food and drink areas, restrooms and entrance areas. So, for many high traffic areas, especially where there's a chance of water spillage, we recommend high quality safety flooring.

All our solutions for high slip-risk areas have $PTV \geq 36$ and are within the R10 slip resistance category. These products deliver sustained slip resistance, reducing the risk of slipping to one in a million for the lifetime of the flooring in areas where water is the contaminant. Also consider practical ways to reduce the risk in the first place, such as installing good quality barrier matting at entrances to reduce dirt and water brought in.

For areas with a low slip risk, where spillages rarely happen and there's no direct access from outside bringing wet or muddy footprints, smooth flooring solutions could be ideal. For corridors, waiting areas and wards, smooth flooring also delivers ease of cleaning and durability and a wide range of aesthetic options.

For high-traffic, heavy footfall areas, durability is a key consideration. Most safety flooring is impact-resistant, which makes it very durable, but look for manufacturer guarantees that prove confidence in the longevity of the flooring. Our safety flooring provides a robust, hardwearing surface that resists many common stains, odours and common chemicals for better hygiene.

Also remember that how that flooring is maintained is essential to how it will perform, so cleaning should form part of the durability considerations. To combat stains from food and drink, salt and dirt, it's important that the cleaning regime is frequent and simple, and to use the right technique for the right flooring, communicated properly to the cleaning teams. You can find easy-to-use cleaning guides for all our products on the Altro website.

Safety and durability are key for flooring for high-traffic areas, but the good news is that there is a huge variety of products to choose from that allow you to deliver that and also design creatively when it comes to the look and feel of a space too.





Long gone are the days of grey or blue or nothing. There is a vast array of bright or muted colours available, including those without the safety flooring 'sparkle', plus ranges that allow biophilic-design to 'bring the outside in'.

For example, Altro Illustra draws inspiration from the natural world with natural stone, textile and mineral designs that deliver visual texture and softness yet provides all the performance characteristics you'd expect from a safety floor. Designs such as these, along with nature-inspired wood safety floors, offer a harmonious blend of style and functionality with textures and softness to help create and enhance feeling of wellbeing within spaces.

High-traffic areas mean large numbers of people are using them, and that means specifiers need to consider the needs of all, including those with disabilities. For example, to consider the needs of the visually impaired, there must be adequate visual contrast between adjacent surfaces. The standards recommend a Light Reflectance Value (LRV) contrast of at least 30 points. This is far easier to achieve now there is such a wide range of design options to choose from, and many manufacturers provide detailed information on LRVs and also now on Chroma values. There have also been huge steps forward in designing for those with dementia or neurodiversity, which should be a consideration when specifying for all high-traffic areas – see the Altro website for more information on this.

Looking generally at design for wellbeing, something else that flooring can do is affect the acoustics of a space and help dampen the sound produced by footfall and other traffic. Acoustics can significantly impact an environment and be

problematic for specific sectors, like hospitals, care homes, dementia and mental health facilities. With flooring options that help reduce the decibel level of sound reflected off them, you can help create calming and comfortable environments wherever they are needed.

Acoustic flooring generally refers to flooring that helps provide sound insulation, thus dampening the effects of sound from within the room, be it airborne noise or impact noise. Acoustic flooring is different from soundproof underlay or flooring, which is designed to reduce sound coming through the floor from adjoining areas. Many modern flooring options incorporate sound reduction, so look for those details along with slip-resistance, aesthetics and durability. With flooring available offering different levels of sound reduction, you can tailor your project to its exact specifications.

The last factor we're considering is sustainability – increasingly important for us all. The growth of adhesive-free flooring is great news for us all, as it comes with excellent sustainability credentials, with some, such as Altro's, being 100% recyclable post-consumer and offering up to 50% saving on embodied carbon versus the equivalent flooring installed with wet adhesive.

Additionally, there are cost and time saving benefits, for example, Altro adhesive-free flooring has no need for a DPM, faster installation, less noise and downtime and no adhesive odours. Many ranges are now available for adhesive-free installation, including many suitable for high-traffic public areas.

www.altro.com



CLINICAL CONFIDENCE

High-performance products from F. Ball and Co. Ltd. have been used to install safe and hygienic flooring in a London hospital as part of a major refurbishment.

Situated over two floors of a repurposed office block, Riverside Hospital, in Brentford, Middlesex, incorporates two operating theatres, 14 en-suite patient bedrooms, and clinical rooms for consultation, diagnostics and screening, for a range of specialisms. Contractors from RSW Projects Ltd. were commissioned to install Tarkett Safety vinyl sheet throughout the hospital, a total area of 1,845m².

Work on the ground floor commenced with the uplifting of existing vinyl floorcoverings and the scabbling and cleaning of the concrete substrate to remove the majority of old adhesive residues. A moisture test found that relative humidity levels in the subfloor were 72%, just below the maximum 75% threshold above which a moisture management solution would be required to suppress excess subfloor moisture and prevent potential floor failure. This meant that contractors could proceed with the flooring installation without applying a waterproof surface membrane.

To provide a perfectly smooth base for the new floorcoverings, contractors applied F. Ball's Stopgap 1200 high-performance smoothing compound at a depth of 3-5mm throughout the ground floor. The fast-setting, fast-drying smoothing compound is suitable for preparing sound internal subfloors. Its protein-free formulation makes it suitable for use in clinical and biologically sensitive areas, such as hospitals, laboratories and clean rooms. It can also be used over old adhesive residues, without the need to prime subfloors beforehand.

Once cured, contractors proceeded to install Tarkett Safety vinyl sheet floorcoverings throughout the 1050m² floor in clinical rooms and corridors, using F. Ball's Styccobond F46 adhesive. The solvent-free, pressure sensitive adhesive was trowel applied before being rolled with a paint roller, pre-coated with the adhesive, to obtain a smooth, uniform appearance and minimise the chance of adhesive shadowing through floorcoverings. The floorcoverings were then laid into the adhesive after it had dried to a firm tack.

On the first floor, where a plywood subfloor had been installed, contractors used the same floorcoverings but selected F. Ball's Stopgap 700 fibre-reinforced, flexible smoothing compound to prepare the 795m² subfloor. They first primed the surface using Stopgap P131 primer. Priming absorbent surfaces, such as plywood, promotes the application characteristics of subsequently applied subfloor preparation products and stops the unacceptably rapid drying of smoothing compounds, which can reduce their working time.

Flexible subfloors, such as metal and plywood, can move when subjected to normal foot traffic and expand and contract naturally as a result of fluctuations in temperature. These movements can cause cracks in general-purpose smoothing compounds, which can begin to show through floorcoverings over time and possibly result in floor failure. Stopgap 700 is reinforced with tiny fibres that maintain the integrity of the smoothing compound and prevent cracks from forming as a result of subfloor movement.

Throughout the building, capping and coving was installed to meet clinical regulations using F. Ball's Styccobond F60 contact adhesive. The instant bond formed by the adhesive means that it is suitable for securing vertical flooring accessories, and its ability to withstand wet cleaning makes it particularly suitable for use in environments subject to extensive cleaning.

Commenting on the project, Tom Parke, contracts manager at RSW Projects Ltd., said: "Riverside Hospital was a substantial project, so we used F. Ball products because we know we can rely on them to produce the best results. The products were easy to use and helped us to create a visually attractive installation that will stand up to many years of wear."

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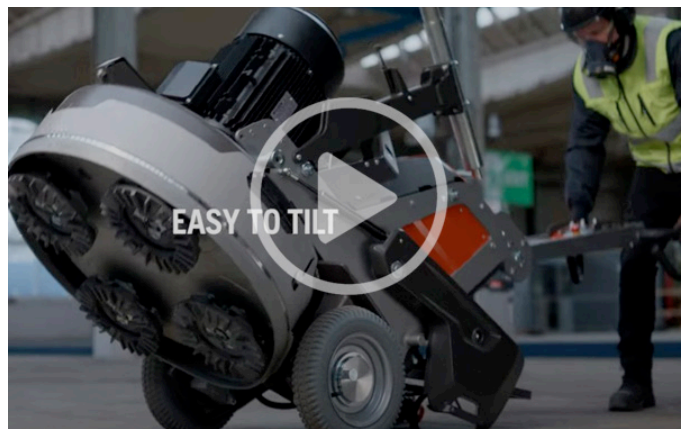
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Scott Bentley, Business Development Manager at **MeasureSquare**, sits down to discuss more about the new MeasureSquare CRM launched earlier this year and how flooring businesses are benefiting from a one stop shop fully integrated solution by reducing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

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REGULATION READY

Flowcrete explains how it supports UK Pharma with GMP-compliant flooring systems.

In pharmaceutical and healthcare environments, flooring is far more than a surface, it is a critical component of hygiene, safety, and regulatory compliance. Flowcrete, a leading provider of industrial resin flooring, offers a range of specialist solutions designed to meet the exacting standards of controlled environments.

Flowcrete's industrial range including the Flowfresh, Flowseal, Flowchem, Flowcoat and Peran ranges are designed to perform under the demanding conditions faced in pharmaceutical and healthcare settings. The products are built to withstand continuous foot traffic, heavy equipment and withstand rigorous cleaning while maintaining hygienic floors.

These Flowcrete products are also compliant with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), a legal requirement enforced by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the UK. GMP ensures that medicines are consistently produced and controlled to quality standards appropriate for their intended use.

For flooring systems, GMP compliance requires the following:

- Smooth, seamless, and non-porous surfaces to prevent microbial growth and contamination.

- Chemical resistance to withstand aggressive cleaning agents and disinfectants.
- Durability under heavy traffic and equipment.
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Will Facer, business development manager for Flowcrete said: "Across the globe, Flowcrete has an excellent track record of providing long-lasting, seamless flooring solutions that help keep blue chip pharmaceutical environments clean and functional, with exceptional service lives. We work with facility managers to understand their key requirements, and tailor-make a fit-for-purpose proposal that will simplify maintenance programmes and reduce the need for costly future refurbishments."

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TAILOR YOUR ADHESIVE SELECTION

Bespoke flooring installations often mean reproducing complex designs from various interlocking shapes of vinyl, large and small. While general-purpose vinyl adhesives are available for such purposes, it is often advantageous to have the benefits of specialist vinyl adhesives, explains an expert at F. Ball and Co. Ltd.

Standard, wet-lay adhesives are available for installing almost any type of vinyl sheet or tile floorcovering. The contractor simply applies the adhesive evenly over the subfloor using a trowel and allows it to dry slightly before placing the floorcoverings and finally rolling to ensure good overall contact.

There are also situations where it may be desirable, or even highly recommended, to use an adhesive with specialist properties. Adhesive selection should be based on the specifics of a flooring installation, not least the environment and conditions to which installations will be exposed, and it is always advisable that contractors check the compatibility of adhesives and particular floorcoverings.

■ PRESSURE SENSITIVE FEATURES

While wet-lay adhesives are suitable where vinyl sheet is being installed in relatively large sections, pressure sensitive adhesives are often the best choice when installations comprise many smaller pieces, including luxury vinyl tiles (LVTs). They form an instant grab upon contact, so contractors don't need to worry about tiles or planks moving about when they are working, making them ideal for where intricate designs or patterns are being created. They also offer an extended open time, reducing the risk of late placement and making them ideal for installations where more complex designs or patterns are being created. Nowadays, pressure sensitive adhesives are available with a range of additional features.

"Pressure sensitive adhesives are often the best choice when installations comprise many smaller pieces, including LVTs."

■ TEMPERATURE TOLERANT REQUIREMENTS

When installing floorcoverings in areas subject to extreme temperatures and temperature fluctuations, for example, it is advisable to use a temperature tolerant adhesive.

High temperatures or extreme temperature fluctuations can cause vinyl floorcoverings to expand and contract significantly, which may lead to unsightly tenting in floorcoverings and gapping at the edges of floorcoverings over time. This can be the case in conservatories and other rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows that are subject to 'solar gain'. Temperature tolerant adhesives develop the high bond strength required to hold floorcoverings



securely in place in such environments, ensuring a long-lasting flooring finish.

■ MOISTURE RESISTANCE

When installing flooring in an area subject to high levels of humidity or surface water, an adhesive with water-resistant properties is essential. An adhesive that is not water resistant may break down and soften when it comes into contact with water, potentially causing floorcoverings to bubble or de-bond.

Epoxy or polyurethane-based adhesives were once the only option for such installations. These adhesives are highly effective

at making areas impermeable to water, so they are also suitable for installing vinyl floorcoverings outdoors where surface water may collect. Nowadays, solvent-free, one-part alternatives are available that are also easier to apply and faster curing, such as F. Ball's Styccobond F73 PLUS.

F. Ball's Styccobond F49 Hybrid PS is an example of a new breed of high-performance, hybrid adhesive, with revolutionary combinations of properties, including temperature tolerance, pressure sensitive characteristics and more. The water-based adhesive has the familiar characteristics of a pressure sensitive adhesive and develops the extremely high bond strength required to hold vinyl floorcoverings firmly in place in areas exposed to extreme temperature fluctuations (from -20C to +60C). The properties of this adhesive also make it moisture resistant, meaning it is suitable for installing vinyl floorcoverings in damp and humid environments.

■ FAST-TRACK SOLUTIONS

Options are also available where contractors face considerable time pressures and a moisture resistant or temperature tolerant adhesive is not required. F. Ball has recently launched a fast-track, pressure sensitive adhesive for LVTs, Styccobond F58 PLUS. Developed as a 'transitional' adhesive, Styccobond F58 PLUS transitions from a wet-lay adhesive when initially applied to a subfloor, through a semi-wet stage to become fully pressure sensitive.

"An adhesive that is not water resistant may break down and soften when it comes into contact with water, potentially causing floorcoverings to bubble or de-bond."

The fast-drying formulation of Styccobond F58 PLUS enables LVT tiles and planks to be secured from just five minutes, while fibres in the adhesive provide resistance to lateral movement, preventing vinyl tiles and planks from moving around when working. As well as helping to reduce movement during installation, the adhesive's high bond strength and strong initial tack prevents excess adhesive oozing between joints, facilitating easier application.

■ COMPATIBILITY CHECK

It is always recommended that flooring contractors check the compatibility of a particular adhesive with a chosen floorcovering. For this purpose, F. Ball produces its industry-leading Recommended Adhesives Guide (RAG), which contains over 6,000 adhesive recommendations for floorcoverings from over 200 international manufacturers. The 2026 version of the guide is now available as a printed booklet. A continuously updated version of the RAG is available as a free app and on the F. Ball website. Alternatively, contractors can contact F. Ball's technical service department, from 8.30am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, for advice on adhesive compatibility. Otherwise, they should consult manufacturer's instructions.

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



THE TIMELESS COMEBACK

From pared-back minimalism to modern country charm, Select First reveals why monochrome interiors are back – and more versatile than ever.

Monochrome interior design has seen a notable resurgence in recent years, driven by a collective desire for simplicity, calm and timelessness in the home.

Its enduring appeal lies in its versatility: whether pared back and minimalist, layered with Japandi warmth, or given a contemporary twist, black-and-white interiors feel both sophisticated and fresh.

As homeowners look to create spaces that are restful yet impactful, the monochrome palette offers a perfect foundation, sleek, balanced and effortlessly adaptable.

THE RISE OF COUNTRY-MONOCHROME

A newer trend is the blending of monochrome with rustic, country-inspired elements. Homeowners are increasingly pairing clean black-and-white foundations with warm, natural woods, from herringbone to oak finishes, to soften the scheme and add character.

This country-monochrome look nods to farmhouse warmth while retaining a modern edge. In addition, nature-inspired materials such as pebble-effect vinyls or stone-textured finishes are gaining popularity, offering durability alongside a tactile, organic sensibility.



Majestic, Desert Oak Warm Natural laminate floor (MJ3551) from Quick-Step



Aspire Collection Yo

MONOCHROME IN THE BATHROOM

Bathrooms have long embraced monochrome for its crisp, clean and enduring appeal. From checkerboard tiles to geometric motifs, the black-and-white palette enhances the sense of order and hygiene while offering endless design flexibility. It pairs beautifully with chrome, brass or matte black fittings, and can be dialled up with bold graphic tiles or kept understated with simple checkerboard designs. The result is a scheme that feels both timeless and contemporary.



rk T99 from Leoline

BALANCING CALM WITH SOFT NEUTRALS

While black and white can sometimes feel stark, the key to achieving a calming effect lies in balance. Introducing a soft neutral carpet grounds the scheme, softening bold contrasts and creating a serene backdrop. Textures such as flatweaves or natural wool blends help add tactility, bringing comfort to living areas without compromising the minimalist aesthetic. This subtle layering ensures that monochrome remains liveable rather than austere.



Camberley Classic in Hessian 04 from Causeway Carpets

KITCHEN GLAMOUR

In the kitchen, monochrome design often finds balance through the use of dark flooring against pale or white cabinetry. Rich black or espresso-toned wood, as well as deep slate and charcoal finishes, ground the space and provide a striking counterpoint to neutral cupboards and worktops.

This contrast not only creates visual drama but also adds depth and warmth, ensuring that the scheme feels welcoming rather than clinical. Paired with brass fixtures, marble surfaces or matte black accents, the look is both contemporary and timeless, making it a favourite in modern homes.



Moduleo LayRed Herringbone Country Oak 54991 from Moduleo

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