

ROOF OVERVIEW

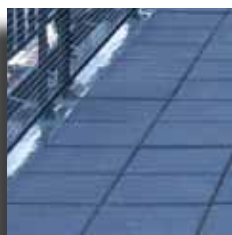
The voice of roof training



SkillBuild



Eco Slate



Promenade tile



Rolled lead sheet

Issue 9
Summer 2011

... plus much more!

THE magazine about your roof training groups, leading federations and key industry figures

Editor's view

It's great to see new businesses telling us about their services and products in this issue. Top consultants **Michael Kilbey Associates** offer their expert advice on page 5, **Eco Decking & Roofing** tells us all about its revolutionary new roofing product on page 7, while **Spartan Tiles** have added a health-conscious new range to their portfolio which decomposes air pollutants that can cause asthma and other respiratory infections (page 13).

In these financially uncertain times it's good to know that help is at hand to recover money owing to us – read how you can do this in Retentionrelease.com's article on page 14.

Clarke Roofing Southern (page 5) has every reason to be proud – the company took one runner-up and two gold awards at the recent National Federation of Roofing Contractors annual congress and awards ceremony. The front cover features their award-winning Sussex Cottage, a challenging project which added to the company's already excellent list of successful projects.

Many readers attended the event in Brighton and recognise the importance of receiving such high accolades from one of

the industry's leading bodies, so we make no apology for mentioning the various prize-winners throughout this issue of Roof Overview.

Which brings us to congratulate one of our leading 'roofing lights' and NFRC award-winner **Chris Hopkins** (**Ploughcroft**, page 12). You might well have spotted Chris – a constant Roof Overview contributor – on the BBC Dragons' Den programme, where he achieved the rare distinction of not only being offered financial backing, but also several dragons competing with each other for the chance to work with him!

Of course, we have our regular contributions from roof training groups, who bring us bang up to date with their news and courses, and our professional associations who play a vital role in so many ways to support and encourage roofing companies of all sizes.

Thank you to everyone in this issue for providing such diverse and interesting articles – we look forward to reading about you, and many others, in future issues.

Sue Clement



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Front cover: The NFRC gold award-winning Sussex Cottage, whose roof was renovated and refurbished by Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd

– The National Federation of Roofing Contractors Limited –

Looking forward to SkillBuild?

It's that time of year again – and The National Federation of Roofing Contractors would like to congratulate roofing trainees who have made it to this year's National SkillBuild Finals at Leeds College of Building on September 14-16.

Technical and training officer Kevin Taylor said: "The event would not be possible without our affiliated colleges, regional roof training groups, employers and, of course, our sponsors.

"It is only with this tremendous support and the enthusiasm of certain individuals that we are able to run such competitions, and therefore support the training and skills of the next generation of roofing contractors."

The slating and tiling competition will be contested by Daniel Biggs (NCC South), Jack Wimbush (Bolton College), Kevin Barker (Leeds College of Building), Scott McGowan (NCC Midlands), Callum Murphy (Edinburgh's Telford College), Stephen Harkin (NFRC Training Centre, Northern Ireland), Charlie Sears (Cornwall College), Alexander Berry (South Lanarkshire College), and Michael Wallace (Newcastle College).

The sheeting and cladding competition will be contested by Scott Lyons and Kane Scott (NCC Scotland) and Barry Hooper and Lawrence East (NCC Midlands).

The reinforced bituminous membranes competition will be contested by Samuel Hall (NCC South), Daniel Kincaid (NCC Midlands), and Grant Stevenson and James Wynn (NCC Scotland).

Places may still be available for the single ply competition and anyone who is interested should send an e-mail to eve@spra.co.uk.

Good luck to you all!

Awards for apprentices.....

As dedicated supporters of roof training, in particular our young roofers, NFRC was once again proud to sponsor this year's National Construction College Awards in Glasgow, Erith and Birmingham.

Kevin said: "We sponsored all the awards for the roofing trades, including slating and tiling, sheeting and cladding and reinforced bituminous membranes, and would like to congratulate all nominees and, of course, winners of these awards.

"We would also like to add our congratulations and admiration to the employers who have supported the students through their apprenticeships in what are still very tough times for the industry."



Young roofers compete to win one of the many regional heats

...and for the country's top roofers

The excitement of the sixth annual roofing awards ceremony may have long since passed, with all the winners announced at a glittering event held in Brighton at the end of May.

However, the build-up is already beginning for next year's event. The Roofing Awards 2012 will be held in Birmingham, and once again will bring the entire industry together to celebrate the very best from across the roofing spectrum, including the introduction of thatching.

"The number of entries for this year's award was once again high and we anticipate that we will see the same levels again. NFRC has grown and so has the number of industry bodies that we work with and support," said PR and marketing co-ordinator Laura Mason.

How to enter will be announced in early autumn, so keep your eye out for that.



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– Michael Kilbey Associates –

Independent advice from **top consultants**



Michael Kilbey Associates was established in 1990 with the sole purpose of providing both industry and property owners with a source of independent advice for solving problems with roofing, cladding and building envelope issues.

Over the last two decades MKA has gained an enviable track record for providing clients with a cost-effective, quality and time-saving service ensuring client satisfaction, and is widely regarded as the UK's leading roofing and cladding consultancy.

"Since it began, the practice has been independent from manufacturer or contractor," explained Michael Kilbey's son and practice partner, Guy.

"With this independence comes the ability to specify the correct solution from all approved products and systems available on the open market. Independent expertise is the key to providing our clients with unbiased advice and solutions to overcome all their roofing and cladding problems and concerns, whether they are commercial, contractual, design, health and safety, litigation or maintenance issues."

The practice works closely with the client to form, and implement with them, a strategy which will ensure that the right solution to the roofing or cladding problem is achieved.

"Our team of commercially-aware, dynamic and experienced designers, engineers, expert witnesses and surveyors (building and quantity) will ensure any brief received from a client will be expertly executed," said Guy.

Over the years their expertise has been a proven success for many clients in a range of industries, including commerce, legal, property and retail. MKA's impressive list of past and current clients ranges from Birse Construction Ltd and Cunningham Lindsey, to Zurich Assurance Ltd and the US Department of State.

The MKA team specialises in the following services:

Surveys and reports for

- ◆ Acquisition, due diligence, dilapidation and manufacturer
- ◆ Design and specification
- ◆ Maintenance schedules
- ◆ Failure (premature or end of life)
- ◆ Structural, rain water/drainage and wind-loading calculations



- ◆ Expert witness as recognised by the Law Society
- ◆ Health and safety advice.

Carbon reduction and sustainability

- ◆ Thermal (insulation efficiency)
- ◆ Green roofing
- ◆ Photovoltaic panels
- ◆ Solar thermal
- ◆ Wind turbines.

Management (including previous listed services, as required)

- ◆ Project management and on-site progress inspections
- ◆ Monitoring specification compliance and quality of installation.

"Our services are bespoke and we are happy to discuss specific requirements – please visit our website at www.mkaconsultants.co.uk or call us, and we will be delighted to help," said Guy.



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– Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd –

Double gold for outstanding achievers



Dedication to training and outstanding workmanship has certainly paid off for Eastbourne-based Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd.

For the company took two gold awards and a runner-up award at the National Federation of Roofing Contractors annual congress and awards ceremony in May, which celebrates and recognises outstanding achievements in the industry.

The first gold award was for health and safety, showing commitment to all aspects of roofing. Then came the icing on the cake; skilled tilers Lloyd Clarke, Joshua Clarke and Mark Ince picked up the second gold award for their project at Sussex Cottage (pictured below).

Managing director Frank Clarke explained: "This was a particularly challenging project involving the renovation of a dilapidated roof to the cottage, which was severely suffering from nail fatigue, batten failure and shale deterioration.

"The original project involved the removal of the entire roof, stripping back to the original timber frame. The project had many classical features, including eyebrow and roundel. The team worked tirelessly to achieve the perfect finish and the judges recognised the high standard of work involved."

Clarke Roofing also took the runner-up award in the heritage category for its work on The Homestead. Karl Strudwick and Robert Sedgwick were commended for their outstanding workmanship on this project.

The awards were presented by Penny Smith, former TV presenter on GMTV.

The Clarke family started in the roofing industry in 1949 with F J Clarke senior as the principal. Managing director Frank Clarke joined the industry in 1974.

As the company progressed two new operatives, Paul Strudwick and David Beer, became directors and shareholders to ensure the continued progression of the company.

"With our experience of past years we are able

to offer services to properties of all ages, which include heritage skills and all modern roofing practices," said Frank.

"Our customers include local authorities, the National Trust, English Heritage, diocese bodies, many building contractors, and of course the general public."

Frank, Paul and David are extremely proud of the achievements their workforce continues to gain.

"We are committed to training young people with 'old-style apprenticeships' to NVQ levels and are recognised and accredited as Investors in People, Trustmark and Contractors Health and Safety (CHAS)," said Frank.

"We train our staff not only in skills, but in all aspects, such as health and safety, first aid, scaffold awareness and site management."

The company's excellent training programme is reflected in winning many awards, not least this year with the NFRC's gold award, the highest achieved for health and safety in the UK.

Frank and his team are certainly not complacent; this year has seen the completion of new, dedicated training facilities where they train their own and other companies' staff in a modern, well equipped room.

In fact, with plenty of awards so far this year, and order books full for the months to come, 2011 is a year to remember in the successful Clarke Roofing records!



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– South Central Independent Roofing Training Group –

Asbestos awareness is still **all-important**

Asbestos – the very word strikes fear into many people’s hearts. Is it natural or synthetic? Is it mined or manufactured? You should be aware of some of the properties of asbestos, where the products can be found and the effect it can have on your health.

Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, you have a duty to provide asbestos awareness training to your employees, together with a training analysis to support this training.

The group is able to provide this asbestos awareness training, but to improve the qualifications and meet the requirements of some main contractors, we are in the process of becoming accredited to the United Kingdom Asbestos Training Association (UKATA).

The instructor has already achieved the two-day managing asbestos course, the presentation is complete and we now await the UKATA audit to enable us to deliver this vital training to you.

Six million tonnes have been imported over the years – but where are they? Which type of survey is appropriate for the work you are carrying out – the management/maintenance survey or the refurbishment and demolition survey? We have all the answers – please contact group training officer Brian Middlemiss for further details.

Did you know that fire regulations have recently changed?



The revised Fire Precautions Act includes fire safety measures in the workplace to ensure workers are safe from risks at all times.

This act places the responsibility of assessing fire regulations firmly onto the employers. They must carry out a thorough written assessment of the workplace to identify risks so they can be minimised immediately; failure to do so risks prosecution. In addition, they must provide, maintain, and test safe systems in accordance with the current fire regulations and guidelines.

Employers must also maintain all their health and safety records, including staff training and equipment testing.

“Our group is pleased to be a member of the Fire Prevention Association,” said Brian. “We can now provide training for safe working while carrying out hot works, the correct selection and safe use of fire extinguishers, and await our instructors’ ‘train the trainer’ course to deliver the fire marshals course.”



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New opportunity for access training



Astra Access Training, originally from Wakefield, has recently opened a

branch in Southampton which offers additional training facilities for the group at a local centre for members in the Hampshire area. Initially the training available will be safety with access equipment: safe working at height, PASMA, the Ladder Association and IPAF.

To mark this joint venture with the group, Astra Access (Southern) provided a free IPAF course: mobile elevated working platforms (MEWPs) for managers. The course covered the duties and responsibilities of managers when selecting and using this type of work equipment, including identifying competent operators and common misuse of machines.

For further details of access courses, please contact Brian.

Solar training comes to the south

The first solar course, hosted by South Coast Roof Training in conjunction with Ploughcroft Solar Training, took place on July 21 at the training centre in Littlehampton.

The one-day course, which was attended by operatives from De Luxe Roofing, consisted of the development history of solar collectors and theory regarding solar collectors. This was followed by practical experience and fitting of various manufacturers’ solar collectors on rigs, incorporating various pitched roof coverings.

The next course has been provisionally booked for early August, with courses delivered on a monthly basis if there is sufficient demand. For more information regarding future courses contact Brian, or South Coast Roof Training on 0845 6780065.



AGM date

This year’s annual general meeting takes place at Sherfield Oaks, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Basingstoke, Hampshire, at 11am on Thursday November 17.

– Eco Decking & Roofing Systems Ltd –

Times, and roofing, are changing...

The world of construction and with it, roofing, have been diversifying in recent years.

This, together with a constant focus on efficiency and health and safety, make for a challenging workplace, one where embracing change is not just desirable, but now essential.

Eco Decking & Roofing Systems Ltd has a product that addresses many of these issues, and yes, it is different!

So what is the background to this product?

When Steve Obertelli realised the world was thinking differently about building and construction products, he went to source a new recycled decking supply in China. The last thing he expected to come back with was a roof slate, but this is exactly what he did.

Steve spent the next four years working directly with the manufacturer to perfect the product for the UK market and get it through its British Board of Agrément (BBA) certification. His company, Eco Decking & Roofing Systems Ltd, now has a revolutionary 100 per cent recycled plastic roof slate ready to hit the construction industry.

“The really tough time was getting it through its BBA certification,” explained Steve. “It was a long slog but worth it, because this unique product has to have credibility and the BBA gives it just that.”

What is so different about this product? The New Tech Eco Slate has many features and benefits:

- ◆ Recycled and recyclable.
- ◆ Fifty-year warranty.

- ◆ BBA-tested.
- ◆ Cuts with a knife and easy to use.
- ◆ Lightweight and easy to handle.
- ◆ Versatile and can be used for ridges and valleys.
- ◆ Bonds to itself without use of adhesive.

These unique properties make this product ideal for any roof, domestic extensions with Velux windows, social housing projects, or where the building is prone to vandalism or has high maintenance costs. In most cases there is no need for lead and it is extremely robust. Each Eco Slate weighs 0.9kg, making it far easier to handle than most roofing tiles/slates, and therefore posing less health and safety implications for the roofer.

The roofer fits the Eco Slate just like a traditional slate, and standard roofing principles must still be followed, including ventilation. Where the installation differs from the traditional method is that it needs board to support it – ply or OSB board is normally used.

This is standard practice in Scotland because of building regulations, but also provides better thermal insulation, something Eco Decking Systems is currently working on with Salford University to measure at its thermal testing facility.

Eco Decking & Roofing Systems has teamed up with Mardon PLC to bring New Tech Eco Slate to the marketplace, with offices in Eastbourne and Lancaster. It is already making inroads into major builders merchants in the construction and roofing industry, and is looking to form long-standing relationships with trade organisations and training groups to influence thinking on sustainable roofing, while being easier and safer to work with.

The Yorkshire Independent Roof Training

Group invited Eco Decking Systems to its recent annual general meeting where the presentation generated considerable interest from the member contractors who attended the event.

To add to its benefits, Eco Decking Systems is also working closely with Salford University to look at its thermal advantages over conventional products. “It doesn’t have to look different to make a difference,” said Steve.



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– Institute of Roofing –

Can you afford not to join us?

The Institute of Roofing was formed in 1980 with a nucleus of members being drawn from senior positions in the industry.

Since then the IoR has seen and weathered many changes, suffering the same highs and lows as the rest of the construction industry, but always striving to improve the standards expected of roofing professionals. These are just some examples:

- ◆ Setting up a regional network of officers to promote and encourage members to attend local meetings and events.
- ◆ Developing an exam structure to set the standards by which new members can become roofing professionals.
- ◆ Offering members access to services such as healthcare, legal advice, insurance and health and safety via IoR-approved providers.

Membership of the Institute has now evolved to become a recognised sign of professional competence in roofing management.

As awareness grows of the importance of roofing qualifications that indicate competence, more and more companies are putting their employees forward to take the necessary exams to join the IoR.

Training courses are now available to enable candidates requiring further training or 'up-skilling' to achieve the necessary knowledge to become IoR members.

These courses are tailored to encompass all aspects of the roofing industry, including heritage, health and safety, business management and contracting skills, construction-related regulations and sustainability.

Dedicated training courses provided by approved external training providers cover six key roofing disciplines as follows:

- ◆ Slating and tiling
- ◆ Sheeting and cladding
- ◆ Reinforced bituminous membranes

- ◆ Mastic asphaltting
- ◆ Liquid coatings
- ◆ Single ply membranes (pictured).

In addition to these courses, the IoR hopes to make an announcement soon regarding the setting up of a 'distance learning' course, to enable those seeking qualifications, but for whatever reason unable to attend day courses, to achieve a recognised qualification leading to IoR membership.

The IoR is aware that we have to integrate more with other trade associations. For example, we are currently working very closely with the Roofing Industry Alliance (RIA) to ensure that our members' voices are heard when proposals and policies are being developed which could directly affect our industry.

The IoR has also been working closely with a number of manufacturers, to provide the opportunity for their sales teams to obtain qualifications leading to IoR membership.

These manufacturers readily understand the benefits of having a sales team that is professionally qualified to industry standards. By encouraging them to seek qualifications, they often find their employees grow in confidence after completing the training course successfully, and see membership of the IoR as a real advantage in career development.

In short, what does IoR membership offer?

- ◆ The opportunity to belong to a unique, roofing-specific professional body.
- ◆ Guidance in gaining nationally-recognised professional qualifications.
- ◆ A clear and structured qualification career path.
- ◆ Continuing professional development.
- ◆ Advice on training locations for roofing management and technician courses leading to IoR examinations.
- ◆ Regular industry updates via the in-house newsletter – Editorial – and the website.



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– Institute of Roofing –

- ◆ Your interests represented within the industry.
- ◆ Regional meetings, talks, seminars, factory visits and the opportunity to attend the IoR annual general meeting (AGM).
- ◆ Free advice service.

Finally, our 31st AGM is going to be held on October 13 at the Botanical Gardens, Birmingham. Why not come along, meet your peers and see for yourself the benefits of IoR membership? If you are already a member, try and make the effort to come and support your Institute.

For further information, take a look at our website www.instituteofroofing.org, or e-mail info@instituteofroofing.org.

Roger takes on business development

Roger White FIoR MCMI has been appointed to the newly-created position of executive officer.

Reporting to the board of governors, he will have responsibility for developing the IoR, including overseeing the administrative affairs of the Institute,



developing the membership, liaising with training groups, trade associations and government bodies.

Chairman Martin Adwick said: “Roger is a well known figure within the construction industry, having spent the last 12 years as specialist manager with ConstructionSkills, where his wide-ranging role involved managing a group which provided a focus for a range of training and related issues to 26 specialist construction federations and

trade associations. He was also actively involved with key training providers, assessment centres and manufacturers.”

Roger’s background includes a City & Guilds in mastic asphalt, working with Vencil Resil, Ruberoid, and as a sales and marketing manager within contracting. He is near to completing a NVQ Level 4 in management.

He said: “I am delighted to accept the position of executive officer. I have spent a considerable part of my working life involved in many aspects of the construction industry, and naturally I see training as essential to the well-being of our industry.”

Growing support round the regions

It has taken a lot of work, but this year every region has held a meeting for its own members, including the long-awaited event in Northern Ireland which was attended by chairman Martin Adwick.

He said: “I’m delighted by our regional support and see this as a vital part of the Institute’s development and success.”

– The Ladder Association –

Ladder Association launches Advocate Scheme

A new campaign from the Ladder Association sets out to inform those who use, or manage the use of, ladders and stepladders about the latest developments in ladder safety, best practice and standards.

The Association has created a special team of ladder advocates to address national and regional meetings of trade bodies whose members are ladder users.

The scheme showcases the contribution that this invaluable piece of equipment makes in the workplace and, in addition, highlights its safe and proficient use through training and best practice. It reinforces the Association’s message that if it’s right to use a ladder, use the right ladder and get trained to use it safely.

The presentation covers a range of topics:

- ◆ Ladders and the Work at Height Regulations

- ◆ What the HSE says about ladders
- ◆ Selecting ladders through risk assessment
- ◆ Using the right ladder and using it safely
- ◆ Competency and the case for training
- ◆ Planning and organising work using ladders
- ◆ The critical role of inspection and maintenance
- ◆ Impending changes to ladder standards
- ◆ Trends in design and ladder technology.

At the end of each presentation, delegates receive a free copy of the Association’s latest 12-page LadderBook and LadderCard information poster. More details from jill.couttie@ladderassociation.org.uk or telephone 0845 260 1048.

Minimum numbers apply.



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– Yorkshire Independent Roof Training Group –

Brian's an example to us all



Congratulations to Brian Hazell, founder of Wakefield-based Ashtree Roofing, who has been awarded an MBE in the 2011 New Year's honour list.

Having raised more than £630,000 to help children in Ethiopia, Brian says he is 'humbled' by the news.

He started The Suzy Fund charity after seeing a picture of a starving girl 35 years ago. "I saw a photo in the paper of this girl in a rubbish dump," he recalled.

"Her parents had put her there, not because they didn't love her but because they couldn't feed her, and they thought someone would take pity. I read that 10p could save her life and thought there must be some way I could help."

Brian began collecting 10p every week outside his church from parishioners at St Peter and Paul Parish in Wakefield and is now raising upwards of £500 every week. As little as 10p can give a child a hot meal, yet these children are lucky to have three meals in a week.

Brian, who is married with six children and 11 grandchildren of his own, said that the real honour was for all the people who had helped him.

"I feel humbled, but proud as well. But in a way I feel sad that you get a meal for doing the decent thing – the decent thing should be automatic," he said.

"My target is to raise £1 million for the charity," he added.

The Suzy Fund is run entirely by volunteers and overheads are kept to an absolute minimum. Now you can now donate with your mobile phone –



simply text SUZY36 to 70070 and you will receive a reply with instructions about how to donate. These donations can be gift-aided too!

Competence in solar installation

The group is working with Leeds College of Building and the Yorkshire Skills Enhancement Fund to deliver the NVQ unit in solar installation to eligible candidates.



Unit QCF 298 – installing solar collectors to roofs in the workplace – is available to roofers who regularly install panels and wish to obtain a qualification to show competence to clients. They are then assessed on site through the on-site assessment and training (OSAT) route. The fund allows this qualification to be delivered to candidates at £175 per person.

This project works alongside that of the National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC), offering training in the installation of solar units and providing progression through a qualification route.

Growth Fund grant for sustainability training

The group has been successful in achieving a grant from the ConstructionSkills Growth Fund in order to deliver workshops on sustainability across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

This project seeks to raise awareness of sustainability issues relevant to roofing contractors. It also explain concepts in a straightforward manner, focusing on the application of policy, legislation and changing practices as they affect roofing.

The group is working with John Middleton of the National Construction College sustainability team to offer an initial course which covers sustainability issues.



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– Yorkshire Independent Roof Training Group –



Group members Ploughcroft show off their green credentials with this stunning wall

This initial one-day workshop is intended for managers, contractors and owners of roofing companies seeking to improve their knowledge and understanding of sustainability and its impact on their business. It is designed to cut through the jargon and help participants produce a simple action plan to enable them to take advantage of new markets.

“We are intending to run a core course up to four times, and from delegates’ responses we will then refine the agenda to highlight the most popular and relevant subjects to expand upon,” explained Denise.

“The courses will be held initially in the parts of our region where demand is greatest, or possibly in house for larger companies if required.”

Initial dates for the course are October 5 and 6

Follow-on workshop titles might include:

Creating/checking your policies on sustainability

Making a roof work for you

- ◆ Light or shade?
- ◆ Hot water or power?
- ◆ Green or brown?

Opportunities in solar/PV

Sustainable roof coverings

- ◆ Flat
- ◆ Pitched

The ‘green’ deal

These courses will cost from £15 and following the programme, a manual will be produced for reference.

Speakers prompt lively debate at AGM

As always, the group’s annual general meeting, which was held on July 26 at the Holiday Express, Oulton, Leeds, was well attended and Denise had invited some interesting presenters to entertain and inform group members.

Once the business of the day, which involved publication of the annual report and the re-election of officers, had been dealt with, the presentations got under way.

Andrew McCormick of Think Zero was the first to take to the floor. Think Zero is the organisation that helps construction businesses to identify areas where they can reduce costs, increase profitability and improve efficiency.



Andrew explained Think Zero’s joint initiative with YORbuild, the collaborative construction framework aimed at the £1.2billion per annum construction services spend of local authorities and the wider public sector in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

They have joined forces to launch the Supply Chain Engagement Programme to improve the connection between the framework, main contractors and the wider supply chain.



Stuart Oakes, from STROMA, spoke about solar and photovoltaic systems, the microgeneration certification scheme (MCS) and the opportunities available to roofing companies.

“The MCS is an internationally-recognised quality assurance scheme which demonstrates to your customers that your company is committed to meeting rigorous and tested standards,” he said.

“Designed with input from installer and product representatives, the MCS gives you a mark of competency and demonstrates to your customers that you can install to the highest quality every time.”

STROMA is a multi-disciplinary construction services company which offers a co-ordinated approach to building sustainability and compliance.



Introducing a new, 100 per cent recycled roofing slate to the UK market, and on this occasion to group members, Peter Nisbet from Eco Decking & Roofing Systems Ltd (see page 9) spoke about the benefits of this strong, pliable and attractive roofing option.



Several members asked questions about the pros and cons of this new product which led to some lively debate between speaker and audience.

Peter said afterwards: “This is a very different product and a challenge to tradition. Some group members questioned the suitability of the Eco Slate, and I would like to reassure them, and everyone hearing about this product for the first time, that the Eco Slate, with full BBA certification, conforms to all building regulations when fitted according to instructions and by competent roofers.”

The adjacent Toby Carvery provided a welcome lunch afterwards where members could catch up with friends and colleagues and digest the morning’s events along with a well-earned roast.

Apprentice uptake

For the first time in a few years it looks like there will be a rise in apprentice numbers at Leeds College of Building, with companies appreciating the value of apprentices in providing true sustainability for roofing companies.

This is evident by the high quality of workmanship provided by Leeds College apprentices who feature highly in national and international roofing awards. This year we have new members supporting apprentices for the first time, and long-established apprentice supporters such as Pickles Bros (Slaters) of Leeds. Gary Shaw of Pickles Brothers is a true supporter of roof training, including apprenticeships, and he is one of the key supporters of the Pathway to Construction project which offers work experience to full-time students at the college.



– Ploughcroft Training –

Awards keep coming for solar-powered Chris



A cheer goes up and the applause is hearty. For everyone in the business knows that Chris and his team are passionate about roof training. Chris is also the epitome of the saying: 'If you want something doing, give it to a busy man.'

Speaking about this award, Chris said: "We are pleased that our hard work and dedication to quality renewable training and installation is being recognised by such prestigious organisations as the NFRC."

Ploughcroft's marketing manager, Babak Daemi, added: "This award cements our position in the industry as leaders of solar renewable energy training and quality installation."

"We are working tirelessly to build a reputable brand in the renewable energy industry and believe awards such as this highlight our position."

A fair amount of speculation is in the air when the annual National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) congress and awards ceremony comes round. Elation and disappointment, congratulations and commiserations flow as freely as the wine while the awards are being announced during, arguably, the industry's most prestigious lunchtime event.

Not least the suspense when the award for exceptional contribution to training is nearing its announcement. Ears are pricked to take in the clues. 'There is one character – and I mean character – that has pushed training in many forms, making it varied, open and accessible to all,' comes the first from NFRC president Jack Camp.

Need more? 'He supported all the NFRC solar training courses, he has worked with us and the Green Roof Organisation to develop training in the green roof sector and he has provided strong support in the photovoltaic training in providing the rigs and materials to ensure this training has got off the ground.' Delegates are beginning to nod sagely and whisper possible names as the picture continues to take shape.

The buzz of suggestions is increasing. 'Added to this, he has supported and helped lead the Yorkshire Roof Training Group as it strives forward. He offers so-called taster days in all the roofing sectors to ensure that there is an acceptable standard of roofing being done in the domestic market.

'Perhaps most important to us, is the fact that he is the first to put his hand up to support any initiative from the trade associations.'

Yes – we've got it! Chris Hopkins of Ploughcroft, you are the winner – and thoroughly deserving – of the NFRC exceptional contribution to training in 2010 award.

Extra training centres expand client base

Leading the way in sustainable roofing training, the company has recently opened four new training centres in Manchester, Stoke, Bognor Regis, and Ashton. It has also set up two administrative bases, one in Exeter and the other in Hertford, to oversee solar installation in the southern half of the country.

Chris said: "The aim of these centres is to help Ploughcroft cope with growing demand, as well as to expand our reach across the UK. The centres offer a wide range of training while keeping in line with Ploughcroft's high standards."

"We want to help the renewable energy industry achieve its goals of reaching the 2020 targets. For this to happen we need more skilled installers throughout the UK. All Ploughcroft's courses provide real-life experience and can be used to help installers achieve MCS accreditation."

Not surprisingly, Chris and his team are now looking to other related training areas, and courses in electrical and heat pump installation courses will soon be added to Ploughcroft's portfolio. Watch this space for further details!



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– Spartan Tiles Ltd –

Look no further for your **perfect tile**

Set up in 1962 and based at Ardleigh near Colchester in Essex, Spartan Tiles is the UK's leading manufacturer of porous promenade tiles.

Widely used throughout the UK, Spartan Tiles provide the perfect surface and finish for flat-roofs, walkways, balconies, terraces.

Porous concrete promenade tile

Spartan Tiles' standard range of porous concrete promenade tiles are available in different colours, shapes and weights and, typically, are used as water-permeable paving for pedestrian areas.

Developed in 1962 for the protection of all types of flat roofing (asphalt, reinforced-bituminous membranes, hot melt rubber, EPDM, single ply, liquid coatings, etc), they are perfect for areas where pedestrian access is required to protect the waterproofing membrane from foot traffic and mechanical damage.

These tiles are:

- ◆ Highly durable.
- ◆ Porous and free-draining.
- ◆ Frost-resistant.
- ◆ Solar-reflective.
- ◆ Manufactured in a range of thicknesses to match application requirements.
- ◆ Manufactured in four different standard colours – ivory, old gold, grey and terracotta, with special colours made to order. Also made with recycled glass aggregate and white cement (see opposite).
- ◆ Through-coloured rather than surface-coloured.
- ◆ Produced in a choice of tile types – plain square, hexagonal and embossed square.

Embossed tiles can be laid to form patterns, such as diamond, square or diagonal.

Depending on the membrane, they can be fully bedded in an adhesive compatible with the sub-base or loose-laid on paving supports. The 25mm thick must be fully bedded, whereas the 38 and 50mm can be loose-laid. There is also a range to sit overlaps on reinforced bituminous membranes to bridge over the laps; these are available in minimum 32mm thick.

Being porous (each tile 305 x 305 x 25mm will hold up to a pint of water to saturation level), they will slow down the water run-off from the roof and are not adversely affected by frost.

Recycled glass aggregate tile (80 per cent recycled glass)

In 2002, the use of recycled glass aggregate (bottle bank glass) as a substitute for natural



aggregate was introduced to enable a range of tiles to be a total of 80 per cent recycled material. This replaces the natural aggregate.

The recycled glass aggregate is produced from bottle bank glass and is crushed, washed and graded.

The tiles are made with white cement as a base, thus having the glass aggregate showing in the surface.

This recycled glass tile has the same characteristics and properties as our concrete tile. Extensive trials are being carried out and we offer this product as a reliable, sustainable and environmentally-friendly product.

The latest development is the addition of OFFNOx (titanium dioxide) to decompose air pollutants NO and NO2, collectively known as NOx and is a major contributor to the formation of ground level ozone, which is strongly associated with asthma and other respiratory infections. The process works during daylight hours by converting hazardous nitrogen dioxide into harmless levels of nitrates that are diluted and washed away by rainwater. This is tested by evaluating the photocatalytic activity in the purification of air using semi-conductor materials.

A range of GRP gratings are available to use as drainage channels and outlet covers.

A full range of bespoke training is available for these tiles at Capital Roofing's training centre in Blackheath, London.



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– Retentionrelease.com –

Retention recovery? Help is at hand!

Over the past few years there has been a worrying increase of retentions being wrongfully withheld by main contractors or clients, with serious financial implications for the businesses involved.

Graham Cashin, who is the managing director of retention recovery company Retentionrelease.com, is being approached by a growing number of subcontractors who are falling prey to these unscrupulous operators.

“Now we are on the edge of a double dip in this current recession, many subcontractors are focusing on recovery of retentions owed to them in order to keep their heads above water,” he said.

This is how Retentionrelease.com can help. It pursues retentions on a ‘no win no fee’ basis and is capable of pursuing one retention, or a whole retention book, with fast results.

Often the problem is that a main contractor uses the retention fund as cash flow and therefore attempts to delay paying out the retention fund, hoping that it will never have to pay it out at all.

“We believe that all retentions should be paid into a stakeholder account with strict procedures to release retentions within the contractual time periods,” explained Graham.

“In addition, there should be a simple, low-cost adjudication process, similar to that organised by the government-authorized tenancy deposit protection scheme, mydeposits, for assured tenancy agreement in the domestic rental market, to resolve disputes arising out of non-payment of disputed retentions.”

Although larger retention disputes could be referred to adjudication under the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act, it is currently very expensive and unnecessarily complicated to do so.

“Government should be lobbied to prevent companies using retention for cash flow or unlawfully withholding payment of a debt when it falls due, with significant penalties for companies that fail to operate the contractual terms and procedures,” Graham added.

If you or your company are having difficulties resolving any issues related to retention, please e-mail graham@retentionrelease.com or telephone 01293 614662.

Retentionrelease.com works closely with Status Credit Insurance Brokers to ensure that companies with credit insurance have all the assistance necessary to properly notify its insurer of any claims a subcontractor has on its credit insurance relating to retention.

For more details about credit insurance please e-mail lance@statuscredit.co.uk.

Retentionrelease.com will give a special discount on its rates to anyone who contacts us quoting this article as its source of information.

Our advice to subcontractors is:

1. Ensure that your order has clear payment terms
2. Buy credit insurance
3. Check the credit status of your client
4. Submit applications on time
5. Chase payment before it is due
6. Charge interest on late payments
7. Vigorously pursue overdue debt.

However, if all your efforts fail, use Retentionrelease.com to recover the debt for you. You won't be disappointed!

Retentionrelease.com

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– Midland Roof Training Group –

AGM – a date not to miss

It is your opportunity to catch up with, and make new, friends and colleagues. This year's annual general meeting is taking place on October 5 at the same venue as last year, the Royal Hotel, Station Road, Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

The event begins at 10.30am and after the meeting lunch will be available. Sponsorship packages are available, so if you would like to promote your business in this way, please contact Livia for further details.

However, there's an important event taking place before the AGM – namely the SkillBuild final, which is being held at Leeds College of Building on September 14, 15 and 16. Good luck to the group's finalist, Scott McGowan, who is a student of the National Construction College Midlands and employed by MGL Roofing Ltd.

Take advantage of our special offers!

The group and ConstructionSkills have joined forces to come up with some offers for our members:

- ◆ Site managers safety training scheme (SMSTS) course: £525 plus VAT per delegate.
- ◆ Site supervisors safety training scheme (SSSTS) course: £260 plus VAT per delegate.

Dates for above available in September and October.



- ◆ Two-day built-up felt roofing hands-on training course: £275 plus VAT per delegate.
- ◆ One-day photovoltaic solar panel course: £195 plus VAT per delegate.
- ◆ One-day PASMA course: £125 plus VAT.
- ◆ Two-day ConstructionSkills programme for the 'Strategy' course, currently available for a discounted price of £295 which includes one night's accommodation at the National Construction College East at Bircham Newton.

We still have some limited Train to Gain funding for NVQ Level 2 and 3 courses.

Finally, congratulations to our National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) award-winners, who attended the presentation ceremony at the National Construction College Midlands in July.



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– Confederation of Roofing Contractors –

Training groups – we're here to support you!

Standing by his pledge to support roof training in whatever way he can, the Confederation of Roofing Contractors chief executive officer Allan Buchan has been discussing possible sponsorship arrangements with several of the regional roof training groups.

"I would be happy to speak to the training officers of each group if they think we can support them in any way," said Allan.

"The standards of roofing skills can only be maintained and improved if roofers are correctly trained and qualified, and we are committed to supporting training across the board."

CORC has been invited to promote the recent government initiative, CompetentRoofers, which allows roofers to self-certify for building regulations on refurbishment work for domestic, commercial and industrial roofing.

"The main benefit of joining the scheme is that you would not have to call out an approved

inspector to pass your work – which saves you time and money," explained Allan.

He and his team are constantly striving to offer their members the best value in all types of services, including insurance, warranties and cash flow issues.

You do not have to be a member to take advantage of their expertise and they are always at the end of the phone to offer advice on a range of roofing matters.

They can be contacted through the details on this page.



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– Lead Contractors Association –

View from the chair

Newly-appointed LCA chairman Nigel Miles sets out some of his views on the outlook for the lead industry, the LCA and its membership.



As well as having my sanity questioned several times, I have also been asked what I intend to do as the new chairman of the Lead Contractors Association.

Perhaps there was a good ulterior reason for Dave Martin stepping down now after four years, during which he has done a fantastic job as LCA chairman and is a very tough act to follow.

This is certainly a very difficult time for most people, particularly those involved in roofing, and especially those of us trying to earn our living designing and fitting the various forms of metal sheets.

Like most of us, I hear all the negatives when it comes to talking to anyone about lead sheet – cost, theft, heavy, dull, boring – certainly the most ‘un-trendy’ of today’s roofing metals. All the current eye-catching photos in the architectural press are of bright, shiny, sharp-angled ‘designer’ buildings, with lead sheet hardly getting a look in unless it’s as an oddity – such as the lion cartouches at the Regent Palace Hotel.

Lead sheet is still out there, of course, and it always will be as part of our heritage, with its fantastic proven track record over centuries of use. But there is a limit to the amount of heritage work and, by its very nature, once a lead roof has been done it will be a very long time before it needs doing again – unless it gets stolen.

Tackling theft

The theft issue won’t go away until the scrap price drops to the point where it is not worth the risk and thieves look for an easier target.

In the meantime, one idea I have is to lobby the British Metals Recycling Association and, perhaps with the help of government legislation, get them to insist that all their members adopt a ‘no ID, no cash’ system. The ID would include a certificate of origin for the metal, photographic proof of ID from the seller, and the formal recording of the licence plate and details of the carrier vehicle, together with the details of their Waste Carriers Licence which they are legally required to carry.

If we can’t stop lead thefts, we can at least make it more difficult for the thieves to dispose of their ill-gotten gains, and I personally think this is where the theft problem could be drastically reduced. In the meantime we can only hope systems like LedLok are successful as a front line deterrent.

So we can’t control the lead price, we can’t control the plague of thefts and we can’t make lead sheet eye-catchingly bright and shiny.

Two lead heads are better than one

Right, that’s enough negatives now.

We are not alone in this industry and I have already met twice with Doug Weston, the new chief executive of the Lead Sheet Association. The lead sheet manufacturers have seen their sales disappear and their appointment of Doug is their first step in doing something about it.

Among other things, he will be carrying a strong and positive message about lead sheet to designers and architects, looking to persuade them to stop thinking short-term and cut-price. Measured by year-on-year performance, lead sheet provides fantastic value for money over its lifespan, and clients have to be persuaded to start looking at the longer term.

Lead sheet certainly ticks all the ‘green issue’ boxes; with low energy usage in production, UK manufacture and 100 per cent recyclability it gets great BREEAM points for new developments. Not so much a carbon footprint then, more like a baby’s bootee!

Direct approaches to the larger main contractors, architects and client base have to be the order of the day – I shouldn’t think a young architect today even knows what a piece of lead sheet looks like, much less appreciates there are different types.

The education of architects, contractors and clients is a role I see for the LCA, but not so much about the product, that’s more the LSA’s job (although we are already talking about joint technical seminars for architects).

What I want to drive home is the message that they must get the specialist LCA member to install lead sheet in order to maximise its lifespan. We have already started an advertising campaign using photographs of good and bad leadwork to highlight the advantages of using an LCA member.

We’ve got it covered for 25 years

I also think the LCA 25-year guarantee scheme is a fantastic promotional tool and I’m not convinced that even every LCA member realises just how good it is.

Any contractor can give a guarantee of their work, but what good is that to their client if they go bust, or just simply refuse to go back to site if there is a problem.

But if it happens, under the scheme another LCA member is sent to sort out the problem



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- Lead Contractors Association -

at no cost to the client – and not only that, every project registered is vetted by a member of the LCA council on completion, to make sure it complies.

Twenty-five years' peace of mind is a unique selling point that distinguishes LCA members apart from the rest – after all, who checks the work of a non-LCA member?

I am determined to raise the profile of our membership, so that whenever leadwork is specified, there is no

question about who should be engaged to

fit it. I want members to send me their success stories about using lead sheet, so we can get them published in the trade press. I am sick and tired of reading about all the lead sheet substitutes that are available – let's start reminding everyone just how good the real thing is!

I want to take every opportunity to publicise lead sheet and the LCA. Of course we haven't got a big budget, so we will have to take opportunities where we find them – but any good promotion of lead is worth shouting about.

First on the list of potential good news stories is the hoped-for English Heritage decision on specifying heritage

skills CSCS cardholders exclusively for their leadwork projects. Following a very positive meeting with ourselves, the National Heritage Training Group and the union UNITE last month, we

received very strong vibes that Historic Scotland and the National Trust will also support the initiative and apply it to projects over £75,000. In addition, the Heritage Lottery Fund will consider including the mention of CSCS heritage cards into their guidelines for funding applications.

After our lengthy discussions with English Heritage, we hope we have now reached a point where they will consider a change in their procurement rules to allow the specification of CSCS heritage skills cardholders for leadwork. If their board accepts the proposal, English Heritage will make a public announcement about it and believe me, when they do, that public announcement will be shouted from the rooftops!

That's the sort of good news I'm talking about – if specifying heritage skills CSCS cardholders (94 per cent of whom are LCA members) is good enough for English Heritage, Historic Scotland and the National Trust (and even gets a mention in dispatches by the Heritage Lottery Fund), it sends a loud and clear message to everyone else involved in specifying lead, doesn't it?



Modern or traditional, lead is great value for your pocket and for the environment – and it looks good too!

Protecting the planet won't cost you the earth

Lead
Did you know that it can last for well over 100 years when specified and fitted correctly?

Lead – beauty with none of the beast

One of the oldest and most durable building materials, rolled lead sheet to BS EN 12588: 2006 will age more beautifully than any of its synthetically-produced substitutes. And it's recyclable, making it unbeatable as a sustainable building product.

It may cost you a bit more to begin with, but rolled lead sheet to BS EN 12588: 2006 will outlive any alternative building materials. So it's great value, for your pocket and for the environment. Not to mention how good it looks too.



Lead Sheet Association

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www.leadsheet.co.uk

– London & Southern Roofing Training Group –

Learn your heritage roofing skills with us!

Members are now able to take advantage of heritage roofing training which leads to an NVQ Level 3.

The specialist apprenticeship programme is being delivered in conjunction with South Coast Roof Training in Littlehampton.

The 30-day course, which is run over a 15-week period, consists of both theoretical knowledge-based units and hands-on practical exercises with traditional materials on specially-designed and constructed rigs.

“Previous delegates have felt that this is a very demanding but gratifying course,” explained Brian.

“They have all have been in the roofing industry for many years, but now feel they need a challenge and change from the normal routine of daily modern roofing techniques.”

The next course will commence in September. Apply now to avoid disappointment as the course is limited to eight delegates per session. If you would like to know more about this course, or would like to visit the centre and view the test pieces and works required, please contact Brian.

Place your business in safe hands

The five-day site managers safety training scheme (SMSTS) course is designed for site managers and trades foremen who are responsible for planning, organising, monitoring and controlling groups of staff and the workforce.

The course covers all relevant legislation and other aspects which affect safe working in the construction industry. It highlights the need for the implementation of the necessary control measures and adequate communication to sustain a health and safety culture among the workforce.

This training is becoming the principal contractor norm for proving competence of the contractor’s supervisory staff, under the requirements of the Construction Design and Management (CDM) regulations.

Brian said: “The group is extremely pleased to have provided two SMSTS courses for the members throughout the year, the most recent having been run in conjunction with South Coast Roof Training.

“We would like to thank Survey Roofing, Fildes

Roofing, Kingsley Roofing and Nimrod Training for their continued support.”

Brian added that this training must be run with a minimum number of six delegates to comply with the course outline.

“The group is currently subsidising the cost of these courses to provide members with a reduced cost of £500 per delegate,” he explained.

“Unfortunately, if the number of delegates does not increase, we will be obliged to review the cost of providing this extremely cost-effective course.”

AEC helps asbestos training

The group is delighted to be working with Airborne Environmental Consultants, a long-established company who has for many years assisted with, and provided, asbestos awareness training for the North West Region Roof Training Group.

AEC has recently moved into new premises at Rainham, Essex. This gives the group additional facilities for training with United Kingdom Asbestos Training Association (UKATA) in asbestos awareness and safe working with non-licensed asbestos removal.

AEC is also able to provide fire safety training, asbestos surveys, environmental surveys and occupational hygiene monitoring.

For further details on courses and costs, please contact group training officer Brian Middlemiss.



Congratulations to group members Clarke Roofing Southern Ltd (see page 5) and Karl Terry Roofing, whose skills and achievements were recently recognised at the recent National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) roofing awards.

And finally... don't miss our annual general meeting, which takes place this year at the National Construction College South in Manor Road, Erith, Kent, at 11am on Wednesday September 14.

London & Southern
Roof Training Group

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Steel yourself for a roofing revolution!



An ever-growing number of construction firms, house-builders and self-build enthusiasts are discovering there's a lot to be said for showing some steel!

Since forming two years ago, Yorkshire-based U-Roof has steadily grown and this easily assembled 'Meccano'-style roofing structure is finding a growing market on residential construction sites across the UK and Ireland.

The cold rolled u-shaped steel structure offers a host of benefits over traditional timber, not least considerable cost and time savings with each installation going up in around a fifth of the time of other systems.

Inventor and U-Roof founder David Thurston commented: "U-Roof is a system that is individually CAD-designed for every roof and, as well as saving builders money, it ticks all of the boxes for sustainable homes, is extremely lightweight and doesn't warp and suffer infestation like timber."

For more details visit www.u-roof.com or call 01422 237922.

ROOFCONSULT calculates wind loads to meet Eurocode

Help in calculating wind loads in accordance with the revised UK National Annex to Eurocode 1 is now available to roofing and cladding manufacturers and contractors through Roofconsult, the independent roofing and cladding consultancy.

Roofconsult's Roofwind range of spreadsheets has been updated to meet the UK National Annex to Eurocode 1 – Actions on structures Part 1-4: General actions – Wind actions (BS EN 1991-1-4:2005), which was revised earlier this year.

The Roofwind range of Excel spreadsheets comprises the original wind loads calculations to BS6399 launched by Roofconsult on its formation in 2003 – Roofwind – and its bigger brother RoofwindPlus, as well as the new European code spreadsheets.

RoofwindEN calculates wind loads based on two categories of terrain – town or country – and where the orography (topography) is not significant. Data has to be manually fed in. But RoofwindPlusEN uses site data from the Fastrak BREve programme from CSC (UK).

From just the National Grid reference of the site, Fastrak BREve determines the site parameters automatically from extensive databases of ground roughness and altitude for sites in the UK and Ireland, and calculates site exposure to give optimum results.

Considerations include building measurements, dominant openings, roof pitch, adjacent buildings, site altitude, distance to sea and town, and probability (1 in 50 years storm) factor.

David Roy FloR, managing director of Roofconsult, which specialises in flat roofing and metal sheeting and cladding, said: "All public funded buildings should have been designed in accordance with the Eurocode from April 2010.

"With the publication of the revised national annex in January, now is a good time to update the spreadsheets to the current British Standard."

The Roofwind spreadsheets can be customised for individual products or systems, such as single ply membranes, composite panel fixings and roof-based photovoltaic systems, and are priced from £350.

J Hempstock & Co. Ltd.



J Hempstock & Co Ltd has been established for over 60 years and remains a family concern with the third generation continuing its ethics for quality and value.

Based in the north west of England, J Hempstock & Co Ltd carries out works to historic and contemporary building nationwide in both the domestic and commercial sectors.

Skilled craftsmen carry out lead sheet and ornamental lead installations, copper, zinc and stainless steel roofing and cladding.

Other disciplines carried out in house are installation of solar thermal and PV panels, rainwater goods, SmartWater application, and church maintenance. Works are carried out as principal as well as subcontractor.



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Need any more information on issues raised in this magazine?

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