

Testing gets results

The final part of the Hackitt Report into the Grenfell Tower disaster is expected to change fundamentally the construction industry's attitude towards the design and fire safety of high rise buildings. However, distributor of architectural cladding, the Vivalda Group, claims that the report will fall short unless complete systems testing is at the heart of the recommendations.

Ben Jayes, Vivalda's managing director, says: "It is absolutely vital that Dame Judith Hackitt's report includes clear measures to ensure that in future cladding and facades are tested as complete systems, ideally in-situ. We understand that this will add cost to construction projects, but the industry has been adopting a 'head in the sand' attitude for too long when it comes to fire safety. So-called 'value engineering' has a lot to answer for, as this has pushed architects and contractors to drive out cost at every opportunity. And this has no doubt contributed to the construction of unsafe buildings."

Vivalda believes that current fire protection standards are fit for purpose,



Ben Jayes

but have not been effectively used. The façades specialist wants to see BS8414 cited as a central pillar of fire safety standards moving forward. Ben Jayes said: "If used appropriately, BS8414 will qualify all the components' performance together as a system, including sheathing, carrier board, carrier sub frame system, insulation, fire barriers, breather membrane, facade material, accessories and finally facade fixings." □

In 1843, the first typewriter was patented, 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens was published and Mount Etna erupted in Italy. It was also the year when Yale was established in a small shop in New York, USA.

Founded by the Yale family in the 19th century, Linus Yale Jr patented the first pin tumbler locking mechanism in 1843 which created the Yale we know today.

To mark the occasion, Yale has a range of activities taking place including social media competitions and product offers. Stephen Roberts, marketing manager for Yale UK, says: "Reaching 175 years is a milestone worthy of celebration for Yale. As one of the oldest brands in the home security market, its longevity highlights the trust and confidence customers have in the brand.

"What's more, it also reinforces how we as a company are continually innovating to stay ahead in the marketplace and meet consumer demands." □



The money wagon

The new EU regulation, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is causing confusion and panic within the business community. An army of consultants, advisors and groups have jumped on the band wagon, organising seminars and events that are often ill-informed, sometimes misleading and all-too-often designed to generate significant fees. Andrew Scott, managing director of Insight Data, says: "Despite the barrage of information, courses and so-called experts that have emerged, there is no official certification or accreditation for GDPR. Anyone with limited knowledge can put on a seminar and offer advice, but our experience is that many of these simply get it wrong. In practice, the principles of the GDPR are straightforward and the Information



Andrew Scott

Commissioners Office (ICO) provides easy to understand and comprehensive guidance for businesses, via www.ico.org.uk

"GDPR focuses on the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and defines how organisations should collect, store and process personal information." □

Correction

In the April Issue of The Fabricator a picture, the property of Edgetech UK, was incorrectly placed in an article in the sealed unit feature which was supplied by another company. This may have given the wrong impression as to the intent of the article. The Fabricator apologises for the mistake and for any misconstruction it may have caused. □

Going for 'go-to' Wood in the works

Hurst Plastics claims to have sealed its position as the UK's largest door panel manufacturer with the announcement that it has increased production by 50% to 3,000 panels a week. The latest year-end figures from Hurst show the output of door panels at record levels with its customer base up by 20%.

Hurst also claims a rise in demand from the commercial sector, supplying its composite doors and accredited composite fire doors to a growing number of local authorities and social housing contractors.

Mark Atkinson, sales director at Hurst Plastics, says: "We are delighted both with our performance over the last 12 months and our record for maintaining consistently high levels of service. With door panels, we really are bucking the trend in a mature market. Admittedly, as the life cycle of the product declines, more businesses exit the market and this perpetuates growth for those that remain. However, our figures do prove that there is still demand for door panels and we will continue to invest in them whilst the need is still there.

"We are fast becoming the 'go to' supplier for panels and our eminence



Mark Atkinson

has opened up some additional opportunities for us across all market sectors. With nearly £2m of new business on board in the last year alone and the investment and capability to help our customers achieve growth, our new financial year is already gearing up to be very exciting indeed. But whilst we are focused on sustained growth, we are dedicated to continuous service improvement too. This is fundamental in helping us to maintain the excellent product consistency and service levels we've become known for." □

The GGF Group has appointed Linda Wood to the post of operations director for Borough IT – the group's IT company.

Wood has worked in IT from the age of 16 and started her career as a PC engineer gaining experience across a variety of projects in infrastructure, software development and support operations.

During the past seven years, Wood worked with the government and has said that this new role offers an exciting opportunity for her and a real change.

Wood joins Borough IT at a time of



Linda Wood

transition for the GGF and its group of subsidiary companies following a restructure late in 2017. Borough IT was set up by the GGF in 2005, initially to manage the FENSA database systems. Today it provides the IT systems and support for the GGF and its five subsidiary companies as well as having numerous external clients such as TrustMark and the Gas Safe Register.

Wood says: "I am pleased to join Borough IT at an exciting time in the company and the overall GGF Group's IT development." □



Sensitivity in designing offices in materials akin to their localities clinched Piercy & Company the BD Office Architect of the Year Award 2018, sponsored by GEZE UK.

The London practice pipped seven other contenders to the hotly contested title with an impressive portfolio – each development projecting a narrative through forms and materials that 'resonate on a local level'.

All Piercy & Company's projects express their belief that office buildings should also engage for civic purposes and be opened up for active use at the ground plane. Other Piercy & Company works in the submission included the refurbishment of 25 Savile Row - currently in development – and the redevelopment of Princelet Street, a re-imagined space from two existing buildings, with pleated roof incorporating glazing, which delivered a contemporary version of the weaving lofts that once filled the Brick Lane area. The practice was announced as the winner at a gala ceremony, at Westminster Park Plaza Hotel, London, in April. □