

INSIGHT

The News Magazine From Sapphire



2020
Q2

How has COVID-19
effected Sapphire?
Page 12

How can site workers
be protected at work?

Read more on page 21



Editor's Overview

Editor

Hello I'm Mary, I'd love to hear your ideas for future content, or questions you would like our experts to answer in future issues. You can email me at mary.mccollum@sapphire.eu.com

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed not only the way we work but the way we live throughout this quarter. In this edition of Insight Magazine, we take a look at how companies working on site and in offices have responded to the lockdown (p.7)

with a featured article from Steelbuild (p.21). We sat down with Evan Lindsell, the MD of operations at Sapphire to see what impact the virus has had on the supply chain and what measures have been taken to safeguard the business and clients (p.12).

We also look to the future of construction, the role of MMC (p.6) and share our research findings into the Irish construction industry (p.22).

Overleaf read about our full balcony fire test carried out to establish how laminate glass acts in a realistic balcony fire scenario. For more information about this test and our other findings on the use of laminate glass on balconies, request a copy of our whitepaper by emailing sales@sapphire.eu.com

Mary McCollum

Mary McCollum

Read more...

Read more about our virtual event series so far on page 16.

Unlock virtual events the recordings at www.resi.build

Event Coordinator

Hello I'm Kelly, we run regular industry roundtable events and CPD's. To join an event or to book a balcony design, balcony fires or drainage CPD, email me at kelly.thompson@sapphire.eu.com

Kelly Thompson

Kelly Thompson

Events



Hindsight

Lockdown Learning Virtual Event Series

Construction: Working from home, learning and staying productive
22nd April 2020

The External Envelope
13th May 2020

A Debate on Laminate Glass
3rd June 2020



Foresight

MMC: The Trust Behind Construction
23rd June 2020

Digital: An Accelerator to Construction
15th July 2020

Get Residential Right in Dublin
12th August

Future of Construction Post-Pandemic? Is MMC the Solution?
9th September

Open CPDs the First Tuesday of every month

Book at www.resi.build

Industry Insight

73%

Construction businesses reported **continuing to trade**

81%

Reported a **decrease in turnover** during COVID-19

46%

Construction workforce have been **furloughed** at some point **under the government scheme**

Number of construction workers furloughed dropped to **22%** in May

69%

69%

of Irish respondents **'very open'** to working with MMC



Nick Haughton

Nick Haughton

Technical Advice

Hello I'm Nick, I keep up to date with latest industry changes and regulations, to guide clients with technical design at early design stages of projects, email me at nick.haughton@sapphire.eu.com

Laminate Glass Fire Testing

We recently carried out a test to see if laminate glass would add to the fire load in the event of a balcony fire. We used a balcony featuring one panel of clear laminate glass, one of obscured laminate glass and one panel of monolithic to see how they each performed. Each glass panel was installed without capping to make the glass as vulnerable to the effects of the fire as possible. The balcony was then furnished with fire-resistant wicker furniture and bamboo privacy screens and an overturned BBQ was replicated with a small amount of burning coals, to create a worst-case scenario. The fire caught extremely quickly, growing to a significant fire within a minute.

The results of this test have been very insightful as we found neither of the laminates added to the fire load and neither melted during the test.

Radiant heat caused one piece of the laminate closest to the fire to smash but the panel integrity was maintained as the radiant heat did not cause the interlayer to delaminate. Even the Nylon spacers between the glass and Cassette® didn't show any visible signs of damage. The monolithic panel however smashed sending large sections of glass into the air and leaving a significant void in the balustrade.

One thing this test made clear was the minimal risk posed by the use of laminate glass on balconies making the safety benefits it offers over monolithic all the more important. These findings have been included in our response to the government's consultation on laminate glass, for access to the video and our detailed findings contact us at sales@sapphire.eu.com



Tottenham Hale

Glide-On™ inset balconies progressing up the façade at Tottenham Hale.



Eastlands E01

Eastlands E01 is one of the largest balcony packages to date with 610 Glide-On™ balconies.



Green Park Phase 6

Progress at Green Park as anchors and arms are casting-in offering optimum balcony rigidity.



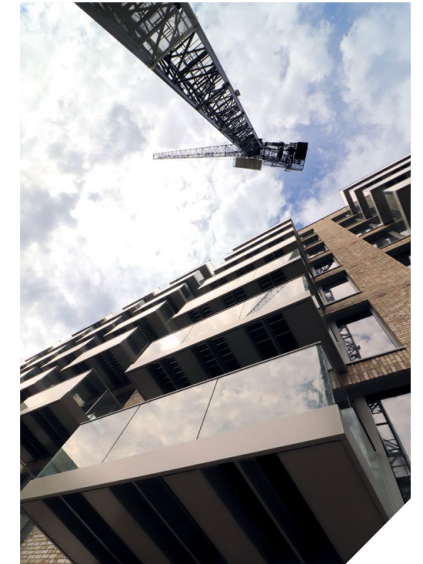
Abbey Road

Arms await balconies at Abbey Road.

Balconies Installed in Less Than 3 Minutes at Upton Park

Sapphire balconies at Upton Park have been installed in less than 3 minutes each by accredited installers Dantaag. In a video posted to LinkedIn by Dantaag MD Brian Hooper, a Glide-On™ balcony can be

seen being installed quickly and easily with installers working from within the building through an open window. The fastest delivery recorded at Upton Park took just 2.47 minutes!



Homes England Commission MMC Study

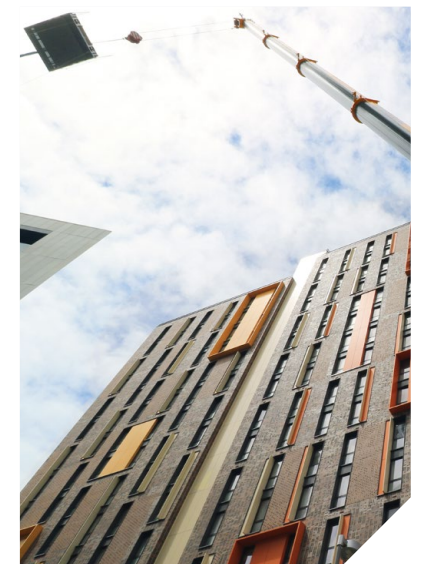
Atkins and Faithful + Gould have been commissioned by Homes England to undertake a multi-year study to assess the effectiveness of modern methods of construction in housebuilding. The study aims to gather "long-term, in-depth

and verifiable data" to drive government strategy in the adoption of MMC. Homes England Chief Executive argues that the study will provide the industry with the evidence it needs to "make informed decisions about MMC".

Number of Construction Workers Furloughed Drops

The wave of furloughed construction workers appears to be receding as government lockdown restrictions loosen. The construction industry makes strides to return to normality as the lockdown eases and workers return to sites, the number furloughed dropped to 22% by the end of May.

Thousands of professionals across the industry have been furloughed including those from the nation's largest housebuilders. Although many are relieved to return to work we are not yet out of the woods as the Government has announced an extension of the furlough scheme into Q3.



The Future of Construction in Ireland

Ireland is facing a significant shortage of housing. The high demand for homes is leading to problems like a higher number of evictions, high rents and homelessness. In fact, homelessness has nearly quadrupled in the last five years, according to the Irish government. Dublin is also on the list of the top 10 most expensive places to rent, according to Deutsche Bank Research from May 2019.

An estimated 35,000 homes need to be built every year for the next decade to bridge the gap between the supply and demand. Does MMC offer a practical solution for Future Construction in Ireland?

Modern Methods of Construction achieves well-designed and quality buildings while saving costs and maintaining high standards. In the short term, the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland believes the following will help with the existing problems:

- Encouragement of communities to live in areas where infrastructure exists, and expansion can happen sustainably.
- Increasing land availability and a balance between the units for sale vs rent.
- Flats over shops can be used as residential set-ups, thus re-using existing land while enhancing sustainability and speedy delivery through MMC.

Technology could be the answer to deliver efficiencies within the construction sector. Modular construction could equate to a value of €1.7Bn in Ireland and put them in the position to meet domestic housing demands properly.

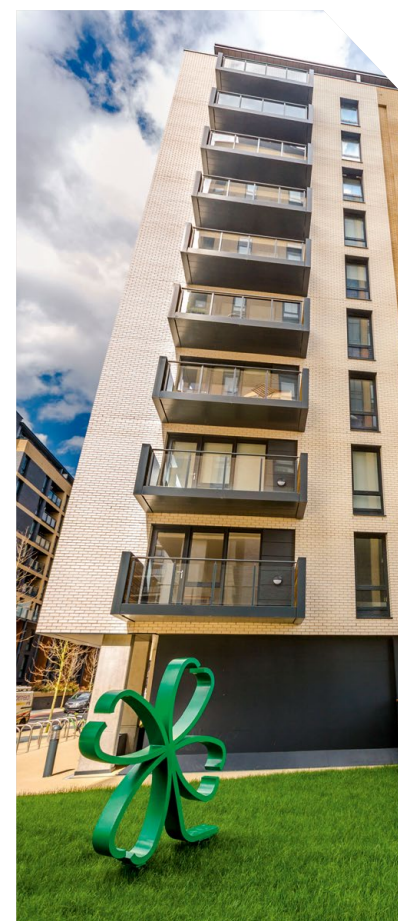
Does MMC offer a practical solution for Future Construction in Ireland?

Advantages of MMC

- Modular buildings can be disassembled, and each module can be re-used. Reducing demand for raw materials, minimising the energy used and re-uses existing materials.
- Waste can be eliminated through recycling and protecting building materials.
- Saves 30-50% of traditional construction time since the construction of modular buildings takes place off-site at the same time as the structural construction.
- Since most of the construction occurs indoors within factories, lousy weather conditions do not delay work.
- Modular builds reduced the rate of human error in the technical processes and cut down on labour hours.
- There are more design options. Modular units can be designed

to fit the external aesthetics of any existing building and modular units.

It certainly seems that MMC is a key cog in fixing the supply of housing, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic which caused the need of much more social distancing, less site labour and the need for efficiency.



How is Sapphire Managing the Effects of COVID-19?

The challenges and impact of COVID-19 have been felt across the industry. When times are good it is easy to make grand promises, but this trying time has given us the chance to show our clients that we can still be trusted to deliver.

Throughout the lock down despite the closing down of many sites we have made the decision not to furlough any members of staff. We made this decision in order to support our staff by maintaining a sense of normalcy and connection between team members.

This also means that all your usual contacts at Sapphire are available when you need them and our levels of service and support are maintained. So, whether you're furloughed or not, or whether your site has closed or not, we'll be here whenever you need us.

Our business model is designed with risk management in mind. So, all our balconies are manufactured 2-3 months ahead of the agreed date and stored securely ready to be called to site. This means any disruption in the supply chain or on site is cushioned by several months' notice allowing us to adapt without effecting our clients and even send balconies to site early if needed.

We see challenging times like these as opportunities to rise to meet the needs of the community. As a result, we've been working hard to support charitable efforts like

the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity and NHS Charities Together. It is essential to us, particularly in times of financial uncertainty to support construction professionals in need and the NHS which cares for us all.

For more on how we're responding to COVID-19 turn to page 12 to hear from our Operations MD, Evan Lindsell or go to www.sapphire.eu.com/covid. To learn more about Lighthouse turn to page 9.



Key Topical
Industry Panel Discussions



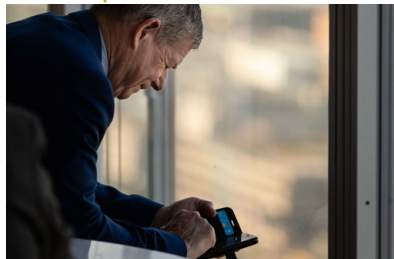
Thought Leader
Industry Insights



Range of CPD Accredited
Insightful Presentations



Keep up with Industry
Developments from Home



Events like today's are key for promoting key issues that are on the industry's agenda.

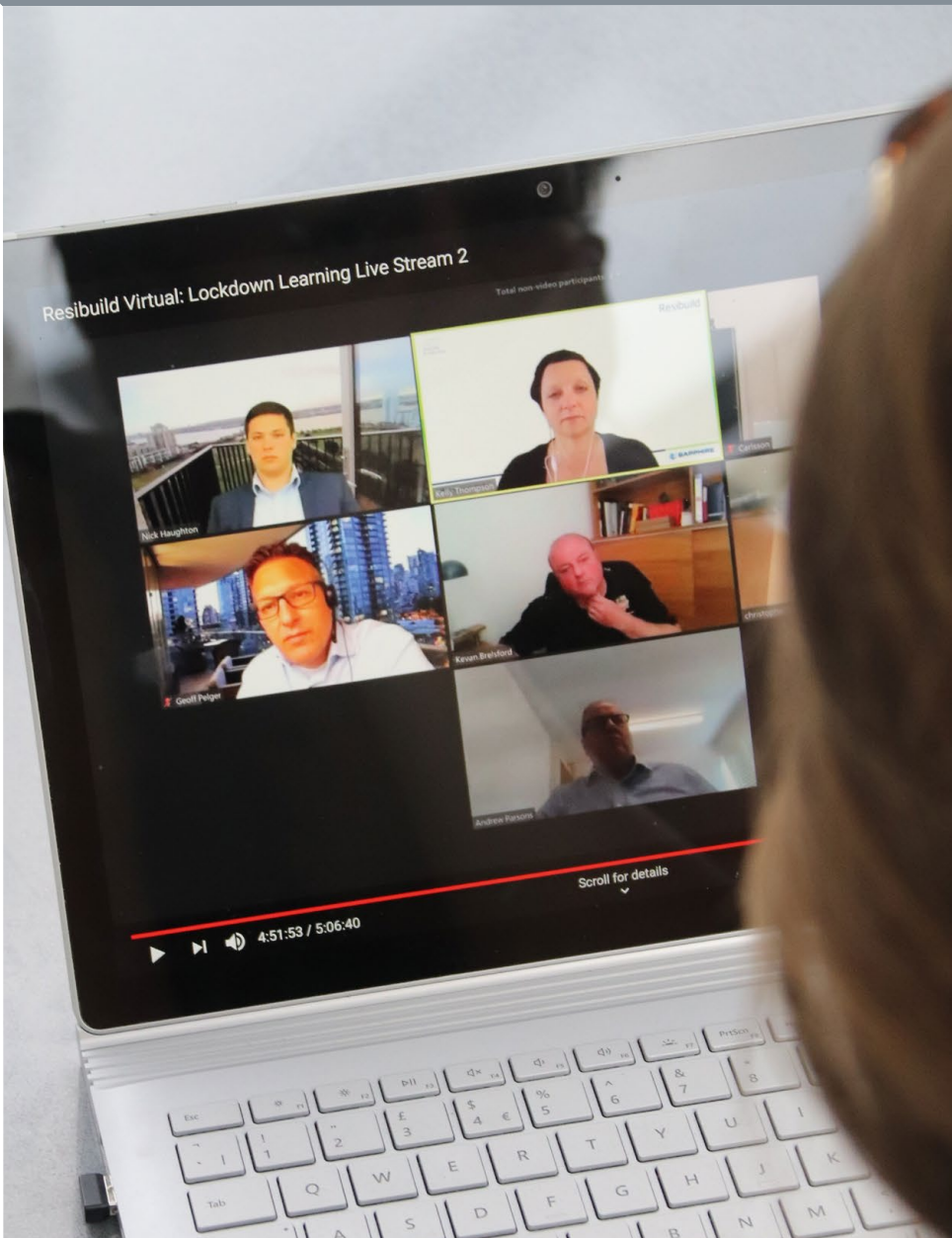
Technical Manager, Barton Willmore Architects

This event was very good, very well organised, very slick.

Technical Manager, Wates

Very insightful event, highly recommended to all

Fire Engineering Officer, Manchester Fire Brigade



Book Your
Attendance Now



Lighthouse in Lockdown

While lockdown has been a challenge for everyone, the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity have been working with some of the hardest hit in our industry.

Lighthouse is the only charity that provides financial and emotional support to the construction community and their families in times of need. They provide:

- 24/7 Construction Industry Hotline
- Emergency financial support
- Advice on welfare and mental wellbeing
- Support on legal, tax and debt management matters
- Education and training initiatives

Compared to this time last year, calls to their helpline are up by over 55% while their usual fundraising efforts are on hold during lockdown. A staggering £320,031 has been raised so far by the construction industry in response to this growing need.

At Sapphire we live up to our value of 'Innovation to Prosper the Community' particularly during times like these. Throughout Q2 we have raised £3,840 in support of both the Lighthouse charity and NHS Charities Together through fundraising quizzes,

our daily marathon challenge and by donating for every virtual event attendee!

Our support is continuing in Q3 and you can help, for every one of our free virtual events you attend live we'll donate £1. We've hosted a range of virtual Lockdown Learning events covering topics from the external envelope to MMC and the use of digital tools in construction. Tune in to one of our upcoming virtual events to get your questions answered live and contribute to a great cause!



Glide-On™ Wows at Pontoon Dock

The site team at Pontoon Dock were bowled over by the speed and simplicity of Glide-On™ install hitting 20 a day.

Pontoon Dock is part on the regeneration of the Royal Docks area providing 236 residential units to meet the growing need for housing in the capital. The project will form a gateway to the Thames Barrier Park which “combines striking landscaping with adventurous planting”. Residents will enjoy exceptional views from their balconies over the River Thames, park and the historic Royal Docks.

“it really came as sold” and was “far quicker than concrete balconies”

There were both logistical and installation challenges at Pontoon Dock as the location required “tight logistical planning”

“I would say that we were not only content with work, but we enjoyed working with the entire Sapphire team involved”

according to the Project Manager and a fast install was essential. The project manager felt “on time delivery was key” to the smooth running of the project programme. We worked with the site team to carefully plan deliveries in synergy with the programme and ensure the balconies were there ready for install when the site needed them.

The speed of the balcony install was also a concern for the site team who were working within a tight project programme. This concern was overcome

by the speed and ease of the install of our Glide-On™ balconies which, as reported by the project manager, regularly hit 20 per day. He added, “if it was a clean run it would have been quicker, but the scaffold strikes set the pace”.

One member of the Bouygues team said “The Sapphire Balcony installation was the most memorable part of my most recent project. It was the first time that our team was using the Sapphire balcony system, so naturally we were slightly apprehensive and anxious about implementing a new process. In the end, we could not have been happier with the way the process went – from clear communication throughout the design phase, providing quality balconies, and professional expertise during



the installation. I would say that we were not only content with work, but we enjoyed working with the entire Sapphire team involved.”

“The Sapphire Balcony installation was the most memorable part” of the project

Our Glide-On™ technology enabled a smooth install to be quickly completed helping cut the full site programme by 4 months. The presence of scaffold on the lower levels would have posed a problem for traditional balcony methods but using our Counter Balance Lifter (CBL) we were able to install balconies in a sequence to suit the needs of the site. This meant balconies

could be installed on the upper floors while scaffold was still in use on the lower levels, adapting the install to fit with the other active trades and ensuring a seamless hand over.

Pontoon Dock is a clear demonstration of the potential of the Sapphire Glide-On™ system and its ability to contribute to dramatic time savings on site and associated costs. The project manager reported that one of the major selling points of Sapphire’s system was the offsite manufacture and was pleased to see “it really came as sold” and was “far quicker than concrete balconies”.

The fully modular construction of our balconies streamlines the installation process avoiding common, costly issues like

the interface of trades on site. These savings are quantifiable with our hypothesising tool which easily calculates the difference and associated savings between Glide-On™ and bolt-on or concrete balconies.

Contact sales@sapphire.eu.com to try the tool and see how the benefits of Glide-On™ could apply to your next project. ■

Key Stats

Architect: **Assael Architecture**
Contractor: **Bouygues**
Installer: **McKean Developments**

Balconies: **205 Cassettes®**
Stores: **14**
Location: **Newham, London**



Ask The Expert



Evan Lindsell

Evan Lindsell started out in our factory in Barnet, working his way up to Contract Manager, then Operations Director and now Operations Managing Director. He has worked closely with the supply chain and clients for many years and through this wealth of experience he brings his expertise in supply chain management to answer your questions on managing COVID-19.

Q: How has COVID-19 effected the production of balconies?

A: Overall, the supply chain remains positive with limited disruption. Output over the first 8 weeks of the crisis in the UK reduced by approximately 30% but remained continuous. Despite the initial shock, the following weeks production returned to full capacity and we've regained lost ground.

Social distancing measures have been introduced across all our production facilities and some additional shifts have been added to facilitate this.

Q: How will this effect clients?

A: Our business model is backed by our brand promise which guarantees balconies will be ready 2-3 months ahead of the agreed date. Unlike Just-In-Time manufacturing we have a significant buffer providing ample time to adjust to the reduced capacity and other changes caused by COVID-19 and ensure our clients are cushioned from any adverse impact. As a result, our production is on track and balconies have been, and will continue to be, delivered on time.



Q: How are you supporting site teams?

A: For the first 8 weeks approximately 70% of sites remained open and continued taking deliveries so we were able to continue as usual with those sites. For the remaining 30% the balconies were simply kept in our secure storage facilities ready for when sites reopened.

With most sites opening from the beginning of June we were able to quickly resume deliveries and support sites in closing out projects.

Q: What are you doing to protect your supply chain?

A: We have established a number of new safety measures to protect the supply chain and Sapphire staff from the virus. For office-based staff we have invested in the necessary technology to support clients and the supply chain while working from home, successfully moving to video calls and remote vesting visits.

For staff on site we have ensured all staff are educated on the virus with new risk assessments and method statements for working on site. We have issued guidance for safe practices and the heightened PPE required as well as discussing others' measures to ensure everyone is adequately covered

Q: Has COVID affected the design capacity within your workforce?

A: Our design output has remained steady as all of our supply team have been equipped with the hardware and software needed to continue. As a result of working from home and more use of video calling with clients we have improved and demonstrated our flexibility and have been able to continue to support at full capacity.



Glide-On™ Key to Rail-Side Install at Deptford Foundry

A potentially hazardous site located next to a railway line is no challenge thanks to offsite manufacture and Glide-On™ install.

Deptford Foundry is located in a historic area of south-east London and sits on of a former metal foundry dating back to 1831 and once home to engineer Josiah Stone. The area's rich industrial heritage is reflected in the design of the balconies featuring tie wires and bronze Cassettes® and soffits.

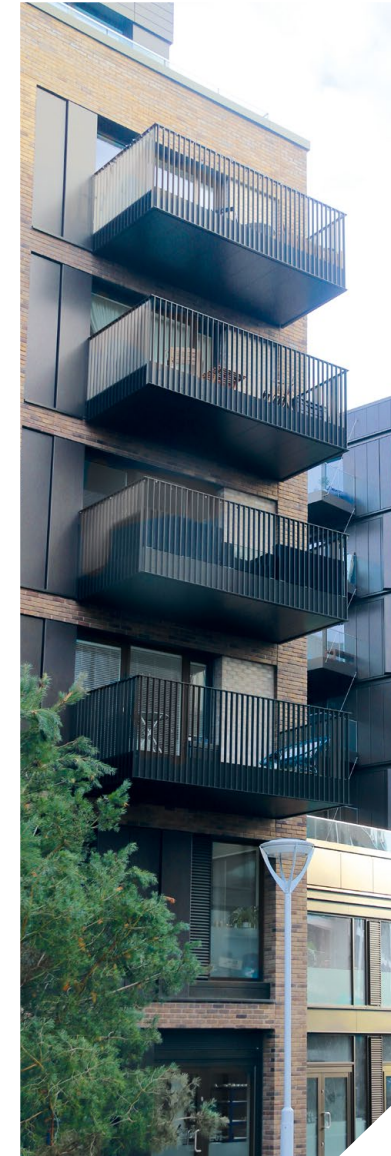
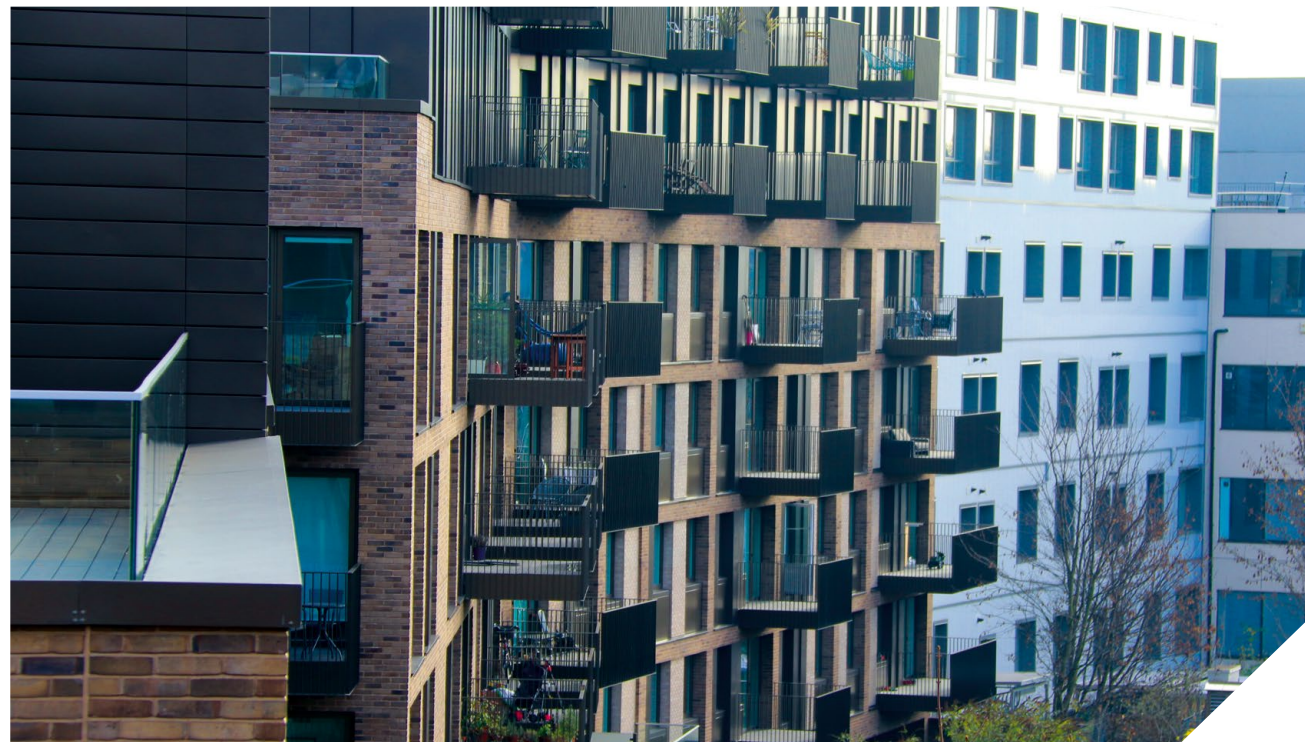
Once a thriving centre of exceptional design, the area is now home to premium apartments each benefitting from access to private balconies and terraces. The development is located adjacent to two

railway lines adding an element of complexity to the install. The proximity of the railway lines meant that traditional balcony designs would have been hazardous to install as nothing could hang over the boundary in the process.

Sapphire's Glide-On™ solution overcame these concerns as the modular prefinished design arrived to site complete and ready for install. The project manager commented that the offsite manufacture of our balconies was "invaluable to this site because of the issues of site logistics".

offsite manufacture of our balconies was "invaluable to this site because of the issues of site logistics"

The simplicity of the install process meant the balconies could Glide-On™ to the awaiting arms and secured in place without the need for installers working below a live load. Installers remained inside the apartments behind our internal door guards preventing any risk



of the leading edge. Once the balconies were on the arms they could be safely bolted in place and the final boards of decking could be fixed in place.

"balconies were installed straight from the lorries" and the system was "fantastically simple"

While working alongside the railway lines would often be a headache for traditional balcony methods the Glide-On™ system made light work of the tight space.



The project manager said, "balconies were installed straight from the lorries" and that the system was "fantastically simple".

Our logistics team worked with the site team to ensure the balconies arrived when they were needed and when the site was ready for install.

The site team reported a fast install limited only by the façade progress and the needs of other trades on site.

Deptford Foundry is a prime example of the benefits of Glide-On™ balconies helping to solve the challenges of many construction sites.

When the site location makes for a complicated install the versatility and simplicity of the Glide-On™ method can be applied with impressive results. ■

Key Stats

Architect: **Associated Architects**
Contractor: **Anthology**
Installer: **McKean Developments**

Balconies: **152 Cassettes®**
Storeys: **8**
Location: **Deptford, London**

Lockdown Learning Virtual Event Series

We launched our Lockdown Learning virtual event series in response to the COVID-19 lockdown to bring the latest insight on key industry topics to your home. We've covered a range of topics from wellbeing and working from home to the external envelope and a debate on the use of laminate glass.

For access to upcoming and past virtual events register at www.resi.build

Past events, available now to stream:

Construction: Working from Home, learning and Staying Productive

For our first lockdown learning event we addressed the changes facing the industry in adjusting to the rules of lockdown and working from home. We were joined by a range of industry professionals who offered their insight and advice to make the most of this time spent at home.

The speakers were:

Philip Dundas from BalconMe
Subject: Maximising Welfare in Highrise Living

Lee Wilmhurst, MD of Steelbuild
Subject: Working Safely on Site During COVID-19

Bob Hayward MD at Be More Effective,
Subject: Remote Work: Tips from the new best-seller

Gareth Dixon, Charity Activity Champion at Sapphire
Subject: Giving to Charity During COVID-19

Bill Hill the Chief Executive of the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity
Subject: COVID-19 Crisis Appeal

The External Envelope

For our second virtual event we examined the external envelope to address key industry questions surrounding façades, fire safety, cavity barriers and non-combustible external products.

The speakers were:

Eugene Korch, Technical Director of F.A.T. Façades
Subject: Balcony and Façade Integration

Nick Haughton, Head of Marketing at Sapphire
Subject: Balconies: From Fires to 'The Ban'

Geoff Pelger, Head of Refurbishment at MyDek
Subject: Bringing Buildings Up to Part B

Barnaby Carrick, Site Service Applications and Technical Specifications Engineer at Siderise
Subject: Open State Cavity Barriers

Mark Taylor, Technical Director at Allies Morrison and Andrew Parsons, Technical Director at Sapphire
Subject: The New BSI Balcony Standard

Kevin Brelsford, Fire Engineer at West Midlands Fire Service
Subject: Designing Out Fire Risk

Carlsson Elkins, Head of Marketing at Sertus
Subject: Smoke Ventilation

A Debate on Laminate Glass

With the government consultation during Q2 and the ongoing ban on its use in balcony balustrades laminate glass remains a key topic of discussion. We hosted a debate with some key players to discuss the merits and concerns about the use of laminate glass on the exterior of high-rise residential buildings.

The panellists were:

Richard Kells, Consultant at Crossley Consult, Tim Hill, R&D/Concept Design Manager at Sapphire Balconies, James Allen, Glass Safety & Security Risk Consultant

at AITCo Consulting, Darryl Holloway, Architectural Sales Manager (UK) at Q-railing UK and Nick Haughton, Head of Marketing at Sapphire Balconies

Join us at an upcoming livestream event

MMC: The Trust Behind Construction

23rd June (see p2)

With the Homes England study into the impact of MMC on the UK construction industry it seems modern methods of construction will be playing a greater role in meeting the housing needs of the nation.

At this Lockdown Learning event we explored the benefits offered by MMC and role they may play in the future of construction.

The speakers are:

Tom Hall, Chief Economist at Barbour
Subject: What's the Road Ahead for Construction

Luke Haughton, Managing Director at Sapphire Balconies
Subject: Reducing Cost Through Standardisation

Ken Davie, Associate at the Supply Chain Sustainability School
Subject: Understanding MMC

Nick Haughton, Head of Marketing at Sapphire Balconies
Subject: MMC in Manchester

Daniel Leech, Group CEO at TDS Design
Subject: BIM, Design and All Things MMC

Laurie Pomeroy, Sales Manager at Duty Point
Subject: Offsite Manufacture Pods

Digital: An Accelerator to Construction

15th July

Speakers to be announced soon

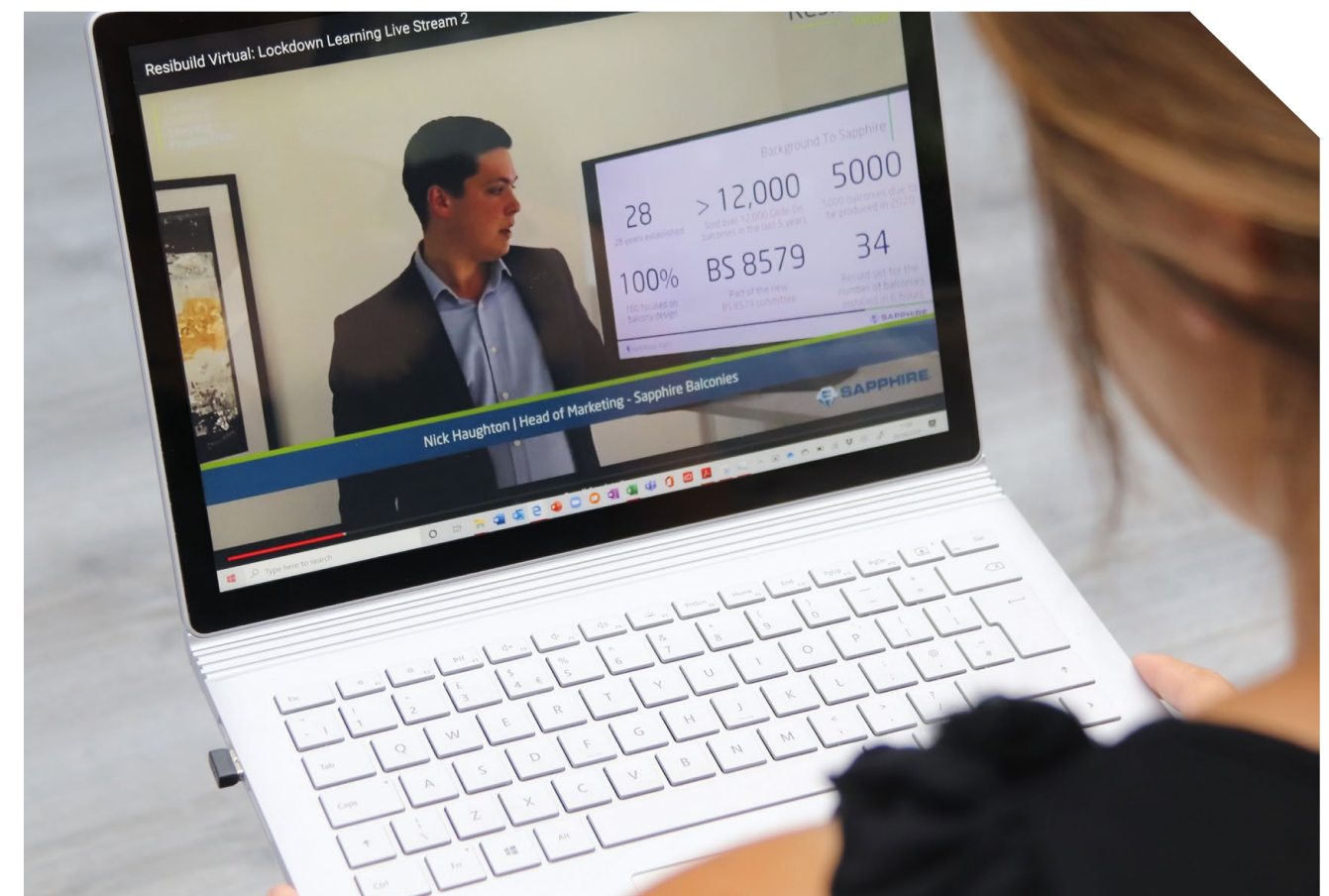
Get Residential Right in Dublin

12th August

Future of Construction Post-Pandemic? Is MMC the Solution?

9th September.

To unlock the previous recordings and sign up to future events at www.resi.build



Maintaining Safety on Balconies in Summer

Summer is prime time for balcony use, we've conducted research into how residents make use of their balconies, to help guide balcony design and specification to ensure the safety of residents.



Socialising and dining

Balconies make the ideal outdoor space for entertaining a few friends but care is needed to ensure safety of residents.

The first risk is that of spilling a drink on a balcony without soffits is that the potentially hot liquid can spill onto neighbours below.

Secondly, barbeques are very popular but extremely hazardous on balconies. The London Fire Brigade say they "attend 1 fire per week in the summer months due to barbeque fires" causing considerable damage to balconies and the building façade.



Smoking

Cigarette butts are one of the highest underlying factors in the rise in balcony fires. Balconies often become furnished with highly combustible furniture making an ideal fuel source for discarded cigarettes. Shortly before the Grenfell disaster, a balcony fire occurred in Greenwich which was thought to be caused by a cigarette igniting a bean bag. In this case, the fire brigade were able to stop it spreading, however considerable damage to both the balcony it happened on and smoke damage

to the façade and balcony above are clear.

How can this be prevented? Having flame retardant furniture certainly supports safe balcony use while also ensuring balconies are designed with non-combustible materials at all heights.



Pools

Paddling pools are surprisingly common on balconies as many residents are unaware of the significant weight loading a pool full of water adds to a balcony.

We design floor loadings to Eurocode's (higher) figure rather than the British Standards. We strive for a much more rigid connection as standard, typically aiming for half of L/180 means that even if loaded with a pool, the pool would need to be extremely deep to be dangerous.



Sapphire's recommendations

Safe balcony use can't just be taken for granted.

Those involved in balcony design, need to make conscious decisions as part of CDM requirements for end users. Considerations should include:

- Structural glass or kick stands for vertical bar balustrades to minimise the risk items dropping.
- Even if not requested by the organisations like NHBC, is it best to specify soffits.
- Class A decking.
- Structural calculations which consider potential resident use such as the addition of paddling pools.
- Clear communication with residents, e.g. avoiding bamboo screens, furniture which makes balustrades climbable, pools etc.

Compliance does not equal safety

People want their balconies to be an extension of their homes and an enhancement to their wellbeing.

Unsafe balconies threaten the wellbeing of all those who live in a building due to increased vertical fire spread risk.

Many buildings in the UK today that comply with current regulations are deemed unsafe by fire prevention experts.

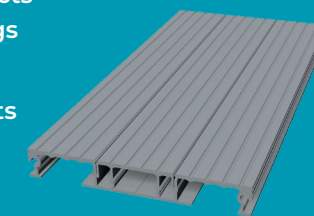
The sure path to full peace of mind and increased wellbeing for residents is a focus on "safety first" refurbishment.

Balcony refurb is not just about replacing combustible materials

Making balconies safe can be challenging.

You need a solution that addresses the key aspects of the challenge in a holistic way. The main things to consider are:

1. Quality and "installability" of decking products
2. The design of your sub structure
3. Installation strategy and optimisation
4. Access solutions, material movement and debris removal
5. Health and safety



Choosing the right partner

When you're planning a refurb project that affects hundreds of people in a high rise building you have to plan to minimize disruption, cost and inconvenience. Choosing a partner that can provide a solution will help.

As part of a group that includes Sapphire Balconies, MyDek have a strong heritage in balcony design, installation and refurbishment.

Innovation is at the heart of everything we do and our solutions driven approach will ensure you end up with the optimal refurbishment solution.

For a free guide to balcony refurb contact us email: refurb@mydek.com

MYDEK®
Non-combustible decking systems

T: +44 (0)3300 94 94 11
www.mydek.com





“There is no Standard but the Steel Build Standard”

Design, fabrication and installation of:

Structural steelwork
Architectural metalwork
Glazed balustrades
Balconies

I found Steel Build one of the most helpful and knowledgeable contractors on site.

The supervisors were courteous and felt as part of the team. When the programme had to be hit they pulled out all the stops. I would not hesitate to use the company again.

Job: ALTO
John Connell
Wates

All of the Steel Build team have been very professional.

Any issues have been dealt with, no problems and straight away.

I will look forward to working with Steel Build on future projects. One of the most professional contractors I have ever worked with.

Job: Carnarvan Road
Stuart Bennett
Hollybrook

What you hope for with a specialist sub-contractor is that they take ownership of their element of your works and complete them without any negative effect on the rest of your package.

I experienced a willingness to be part of the larger site team, which enabled us to provide a seamless installation to our client.

Job: Wates NW06
Steve Harris
OCL Facades



ISO 9001:2015



www.steelbuildltd.com

T: 01234 376990 E: info@steelbuildltd.com

Unit 1 Bryher Farm, Colesdon Road, Duck's Cross, Bedford MK44 2QW

How to Cope with COVID-19 On-Site?

We interviewed Lee Wilmhurst, MD of Steelbuild to discuss how they're coping with social distancing and COVID-19 on site.

Lee shared some of the measures they've taken to keep staff safe while supporting on site and the process he went through to reach these processes.

What was your initial response to the threat of COVID-19?

We took it back to basics and rolled out training internally, starting with myself. I found some training from the World Health Organisation where I gained an understanding of the virus and possible prevention methods and control measures which can be used.

Once I had my understanding, we rolled that training out to the rest of the staff so we had a basic understanding, a bit similar to asbestos awareness, so everyone had a respect for what they were working with.

What measures have you put in place on site to reduce the risk presented by COVID-19?

Firstly, we created an online platform where staff fill in a daily form which asks about their symptoms and it creates a traffic light system to indicate their level of risk. This triggers a response based on the result and gives everyone peace of mind knowing symptoms are being closely monitored.

We've brought in hard hats with fully engaged face shields which are easily

engaged and detracted.

Then, we have the standard FFP3 face masks which are a last resort for us. We've also implemented 5 sets of overalls and gloves for staff so they can wear a new set everyday over their clothes while on site.

We've also created a buddy scheme by strategically pairing up members of staff to work together for the foreseeable future. This builds trust between team members and limits their exposure.

How did you initially bring this process to construction sites? Where did you start?

We were very fortunate to be on a very large Wates residential scheme, Wembley E01 installing 610 Sapphire balconies as well as a metalwork package. This was a very large-scale job with a very good customer who have bought into this programme and gone over and above to deliver the guidelines.

To watch the full livestream from the Resibuild Virtual event go to our [YouTube channel](#) or www.resi.build



Researching Irish Construction

In December 2018 the Government amended the Building Regulations to restrict the use of combustible materials in and on external walls and specified attachments like balconies.

We recently carried out a study into the Irish construction industry to get an understanding of Irish professionals' perspectives. We spoke to a range of Irish construction professionals to ask where they felt the industry was heading and what the biggest needs are.

69% of respondents reported being very open to working with modern methods of construction,

for example offsite manufacturing and other alternatives to traditional construction. Ireland is currently facing a housing crisis and have struggled to meet government housing targets. Greater adoption of MMC may facilitate a larger housing output and enable the industry meet the needs of the nation, particularly in Dublin.

The most important consideration in selecting

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balcony types identified was fire safety with some respondents making direct reference to the Grenfell Tower fire.

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Balconies at the Forefront of the Lockdown

In December 2018 the Government amended the Building Regulations to restrict the use of combustible materials in and on external walls and specified attachments like balconies.

COVID-19 and the subsequent national lockdown has been a challenging time but it has also led to a greater value for balconies. While lockdown orders are in place a greater focus has come on the home and making the most of our living space. As a result, balconies have offered some much needed outside access for many residents. People have taken to their balconies to display art, music and creativity to entertain and lift the spirit of those around.

London Man Runs Half Marathon on Balcony

One particularly resourceful Londoner got creative and ran a half marathon on his balcony raising about £900 for a local charity. According to Sky News, the 27-year old Mr Hustler originally planned to participate in the London Landmarks Half Marathon on the 29th of March. But due to the ban on large gatherings, the organisers moved the race to a 'virtual' local landmark run instead.

Just a few days before the race, Mr Hustler went into two weeks of self-isolation. Instead of giving up, Mr Hustler decided to run the marathon out on his four-metre-long east London balcony. Fuelled with his curated

podcast and music list and continuous encouragement from his girlfriend, he managed to complete his half marathon in three hours and forty-five minutes.

South London Couple put on Easter Day Balcony Violin Concert for Neighbours

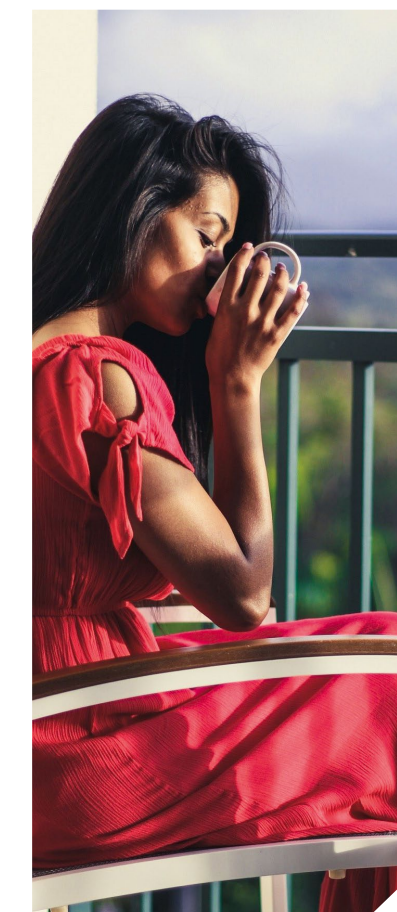
On another balcony in south London, an A&E doctor and her violinist husband treated their neighbours to an Easter day violin concert. The Daily Mail reported that the Stockwell couple played Vivaldi's Spring, Oblivion by Astor Piazzolla and Csardas by Vittorio Monti to their awestruck drawing listeners in from balconies and windows around.

VE Day Celebrations with High Tea, Bunting and Balcony Concerts

Meanwhile, in balconies of the Wharfedale and Aireborough communities, VE Day was celebrated with high teas, bunting and balcony concerts. According to ilkleygazette.co.uk, a resident got out onto her balcony and serenaded her neighbours with her beautiful voice.

This prompted the neighbours to step out onto their balconies and cheer her on. A couple even took to dancing on the streets as she progressed with her balcony concert.

Read the full article at www.sapphire.eu.com/news



A photograph of a modern building with multiple levels of balconies. The balconies have glass railings and dark, cantilevered bases. The building is set against a clear blue sky. The image is used as a background for the advertisement.

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