

Plumbing & Heating News

in this issue

Pg2: BMF expands into Irish market

Pg3: BMF welcomes new members

Pg5: Smart Technology

Pg7: CE Marking and GDPR

Pg8: Trade Supplier Apprenticeship

Pg12: Regional Centres and Diary



Bristan joins the BMF

Bristan, the UK's number one taps and showers brand, has joined the BMF, in a show of support for its merchant partners.

As the only trade association for builders' merchants and suppliers in the UK, the move to join BMF is part of the company's strategy to continue to assist merchants in the building materials distribution sector and to raise awareness of the issues they face.

A key aim of the BMF is to be the authoritative voice for merchants and suppliers, working closely with allied industry groups and regulatory bodies such as trading standards and planning departments. By partnering with the organisation, Bristan hopes to collaborate on overcoming the challenges affecting member merchants, which is a core channel for the business.

Ian Hansell, General Manager for Bristan, commented: "Merchants play a really important role in the industry, providing crucial advice to customers on the products and services that can have a big impact on a build."

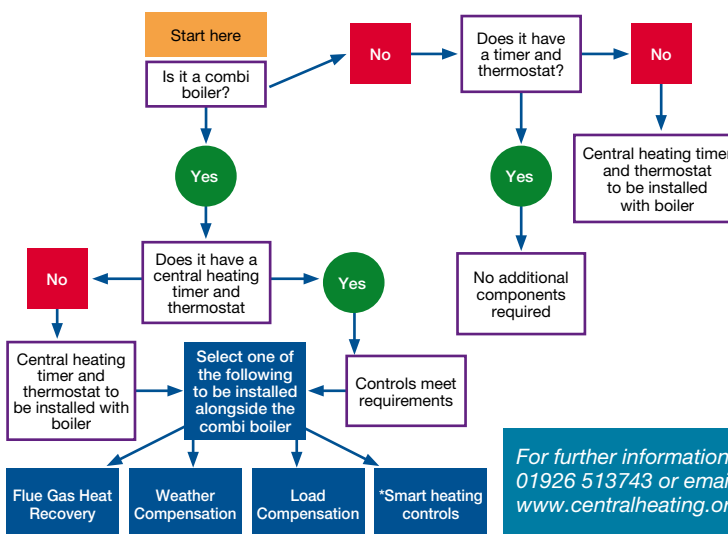
"Bristan is continually looking to enhance our merchant relationships and our membership of BMF provides us with the opportunity to support merchants on the issues that affect them most. We look forward to becoming an active member of the BMF group."

Bristan is a market leading supplier of domestic and commercial bathroom products. For more information visit www.bristan.com.



New heating policy from April 2018!

By Stewart Clements, Director, HHIC



Mandatory from April 2018!



For further information contact Laura on 01926 513743 or email laurah@eua.org.uk. www.centralheating.org.uk

From April 2018, when a gas combination boiler is installed, an additional energy efficiency measure will be required. This requirement is flexible to allow a suitable choice to be made that reflects the diverse nature of the housing stock, and the needs of the household. The energy saving technologies that can be used to comply are:

- Flue gas heat recovery systems
- Weather Compensation
- Load Compensation
- Smart controls featuring automation and optimisation functions

This new policy is called Boiler Plus, announced in October 2017 by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The policy, which will form part of Building Regulations will also require a new minimum performance standard for domestic gas boilers in English homes to be set at 92% ErP. The ErP Directive aims to phase out poorly performing products across a range of product groups to reduce carbon emissions across Europe, with the ultimate goal of achieving the EU's 2020 targets.

Following the announcement there have been a few questions, the most common below, together with my answers.

Who will police compliance with Boiler Plus?

The same people who currently police Building Reg. compliance, specifically Part L, which would be local authority building control (LABC). If you do not comply with Building Regulations the local authority may prosecute you in the Magistrates' Court where an unlimited fine may be imposed (sections 35 and 35A of the Building Act 1984). This is possible up to two years after the completion of the work.

What if customers don't want smart controls?

Having more sophisticated controls is a simple way to improve the efficiency of a central heating system. Increasing the efficiency of a boiler lowers costs of energy bills. The reason that there are a number of options to comply is to reflect not only the diverse housing stock in the UK, but also to offer choice to the customer.



News

BMF expands into the Irish market



The BMF has signed a group membership agreement with Allied Merchants Buying Association (AMBA), Ireland's leading independent merchant buying group.

Formed in 2011, AMBA is the fastest growing merchant buying group in Ireland, encompassing 17 members with 85 outlets and an annual spend of some 130m on building materials, plumbing and heating goods and timber products. Total turnover of members is around €230m. All 17 AMBA members joined the BMF in December 2017.

John Newcomb, BMF CEO said: "While the BMF has always had the ability within its constitution to extend its reach into Ireland, strategically the impetus to join had to come from Irish merchants. When AMBA made their request, we

were delighted to respond and look forward to providing our full range of training and support services to their members. We are very excited at the prospect of developing our alliance and extending our core membership benefits to AMBA's members."

Keith Giblin, AMBA CEO explained why AMBA has joined the BMF: "AMBA's fundamental purpose is as a low cost, highly professional group with strategically placed members working with partner suppliers. Our Buying Group has grown rapidly since its inception, successfully ensuring we defend and grow our members' competitive position, profitability and market share by working together. We are continually focused on adding further value to our members and an alliance with the BMF offers numerous opportunities to enhance our members' businesses. Foremost amongst these is the BMF's approach to recruitment, which is helping to attract and develop talented people within the merchant industry."

To read more about AMBA's membership of the BMF please visit www.bmf.org.uk/news.



Youth Recruitment Website Refresh

The BMF has refreshed and updated its Merchant Recruitment Website www.merchant-recruitment.co.uk. The changes have made the Job Providers and Jobs Board pages more prominent.

There is a fresh new home-page design to give people an exciting insight into the job roles on offer within our Industry. Many members have taken advantage of this free jobs board which BMF members can post their vacancies on for nothing.

If you would like to become a BMF ambassador or to find out about posting your company's vacancies on the site please email James Spillane at james.spillane@bmf.org.uk.

Another momentous year

The BMF is set for a year of celebration with three major events taking place during 2018 to commemorate a trio of landmark anniversaries. As well as the 40th anniversary of the Builders' Merchants Federation itself, the BMF is marking 110 years as a Trade Body and 5 years since it relocated from London to its current HQ in Coventry.

To celebrate these milestones in the BMF's history, the BMF is holding three special events:

- Parliamentary Reception on 24 April (by invitation only), hosted by Jim

Cunningham, MP for Coventry South where BMF HQ is based. The event will bring together an invited audience of BMF members, MPs and Peers to network, and to promote and explain the role, value and importance of merchants within the building supply chain.

- The first Young Merchants' Conference - at the NEC on 11 October. More details will be announced soon.
- Anniversary Dinner for BMF members, on 29 November, sees the BMF return to the award-winning Belfry Hotel in Warwickshire, where the BMF celebrated its Trade Body centenary in 2008.



John Newcomb, the BMF's Chief Executive, said:

"This is a very special year for the BMF and we have planned three very different events which both commemorate the merchant industry's heritage and look forward to a vibrant future. We look forward to working, and celebrating, with as many members as possible throughout this milestone year."

For more information please visit www.bmf.org.uk/events.



New Members

CEO Welcomes New Members



"I am delighted to welcome all these new members into membership. The BMF is the trade association that brings together merchants and their suppliers and I'm delighted all these members are already planning to take an active role with the BMF and I look forward to working with them."

John Newcomb, BMF CEO



Burns of Woking is a family run company with over 50 years' experience in providing high quality bathroom and bedroom products from sink traps to steam showers – entire bathrooms to bedroom cabinets.

Founded by Robin and Anne Hoyle, the company is now run by son and daughter, Toby Hoyle and Sally Cave. In 1963 the company started out as a plumbers' merchants business, which quickly gained a fantastic reputation for its friendly atmosphere and knowledgeable staff, then several years ago it was decided to open a showroom to capitalise on the extensive knowledge and experience within the company. The Burns showroom is one of the largest in Surrey and houses a vast range of bathrooms, bedrooms and associated products.

Burns stock the latest in cutting edge design products and works closely with all its suppliers. All Burns' designers have joined the company with impeccable credentials, and continue to attend the latest courses to keep at the top end of bathroom design and trends. Within the local business community of Woking, Burns is highly regarded and respected, due to its exceptional customer service and professionalism.

Oscar Hoyle, Marketing Coordinator said *"One of the main reasons we have joined BMF is to take advantage of the fantastic training and interesting events available. We hope that with joining we will be able to improve our already fantastic knowledge within the industry."*

Visit www.dwburns.co.uk

The BMF welcome the following new Plumbing & Heating members:

Merchant Members

BURNS





New Members

New supplier member Fibo UK drives growth for merchants

Fibo is the European market leader in bathroom, kitchen and wet room laminate wall panels, supplying wall panels to over 70,000 bathrooms a year across more than 10 European countries.

Established in Norway in 1952 and available in the UK since 1981, Fibo is experiencing strong growth as more merchants realise the benefits of selling wall panels over traditional tiles. In 2017 Fibo completed construction of its new £14 million production facility in Lyngdal, South Norway, boosting Fibo's capacity from 2.5 million m² to 8 million m² per year.

Fibo offers a modern and unique alternative to ceramic tiling. The wall panels are a stylish yet practical way of enhancing walls, from high-end domestic projects and hotels, to leisure centres and social housing. The panels are perfect for both refurbishment and new build projects with a wide choice in range, style, colour and finish – including a 'grouting' line that creates the look and feel of real tiles. Its unique Aqualock system, with a tongue-and-groove design, means the



panels are easy and quick to install - up to five times faster than traditional tiles – saving builders and contractors time and money. They can be fitted directly onto walls, tiles or stud partitioning for added convenience, and come with a market-leading 15 year guarantee.

Fibo's leading range is backed by extensive training and support for merchants to help them sell and stand out from the competition. Plumbing merchant, BBS Plumbing & Heating Supplies, were so impressed with Fibo's products and service that they installed a new showroom in their Bristol branch to include over 20 new bays. The panels cover over 150m² of wall space,

making it Fibo's largest retail display area in Europe. Fibo is also an approved supplier to all members of the FORTIS independent merchant buying group.

Managing Director, Scott Beattie comments: "In this period of rapid growth and expansion it makes sense to align ourselves to key industry bodies like the BMF. We recognise the value of membership and look forward to the many opportunities it will bring in helping us build new and existing relationships with merchants."

Visit www.fibo.co.uk and follow @Fibo_UK on Twitter.

The BMF welcome the following new Plumbing & Heating members:

Supplier Members



MAKING PEOPLE
WARMER



Service Member





Market Data

Smart Technology - blurred lines

The phenomenon of the Internet of Things (IoT) has given birth to a new wave of connected devices which improve safety, security and comfort around the home. These products offer electricians the chance to move into business areas, such as water leak detection, which were traditionally occupied by other trades. Andy Mansfield, marketing communications manager at Honeywell, explains more:

The latest figures point to growing consumer interest in intelligent appliances, as 1 in 3 people predict that most homes will be smart in the next 5–10 years. Key drivers include energy saving (43%) and security (23%) with devices such as connected thermostats, Wi-Fi cameras and digital sensors already popular choices among many homeowners.

The good news for tradespeople is a third (33%) of people would prefer a professional installation – meaning



significant opportunities to upsell products and charge an installation fee.

Traditionally, fitting a thermostat or security product would come under the remit of a heating engineer or security specialist. However, when it comes to these new connected devices, electricians have the skillset that makes them perfect for the job. This is because they are electrical devices, so there is often a wiring element to installation which heating engineers may require assistance with.

Not only is the demand there, but also the product range to accommodate it. Honeywell has expanded its Lyric family to include the C1 Wi-Fi Security Camera and W1 Wi-Fi Water Leak and Freeze Detector. This enables electricians to have a full suite of connected devices in their arsenal, which can then be upsold to increase the return on each job. Each device is controlled via

the Lyric app, meaning there is less of a learning curve as electricians only need to become familiar with one interface.

For self-employed electricians, time is money, so speed is key to fitting in more work and running a profitable business. Thankfully, most connected devices are quick and straightforward to install. Both the W1 and C1 simply need to be powered up, connected to Wi-Fi, then configured through the app which guides users through the process. The T6R thermostat has a flip-up wiring bar, clearly labelled terminals and strain relief to make the wiring process as easy as possible.

Whether it is leak detection, home security or heating; the lines between electricians and other trades are blurring, creating a platform for business growth. The connected home is showing no signs of stopping and electricians who capitalise on it in the early stages will reap the rewards.

For more information visit <http://smarthomeweek.co.uk/a-research-study> or email honeywell@bright-consultancy.co.uk.

Sales Indicators

BMF and Phocas (a BMF Service Member) have teamed up to introduce a brand new look for BMF Sales Indicators, bringing with it greater analytics and functionality. Moving away from the excel spreadsheet, data will be submitted into an online area. These changes will bring a more consistent sample size, be far less onerous and greatly reduce any time spent inputting the data – 36 input fields for regions will be reduced to just 6. You will see a much more visually-orientated dashboard – some samples of which can be seen here.

In order for you to receive these reports you will need only change the way in which you input figures. An online member area will be the portal for data submission and also the area you can view the monthly findings. With this electronic format there will be greater manipulation

of figures available. For example, user defined periods of comparison can be chosen. There will also be greater functionality in displaying the data which will provide more sophisticated analysis.

The BMF launched the new look BMF Sales Indicators in January 2018 with the new-look report. For the time being, please continue to send your monthly submissions in the same format. There is a taster video on the BMF website to highlight some of the features and analytics on offer at www.bmf.org.uk/BMF/Information-Centre/Market_Data.

If you have fallen out of regular submission of figures to the BMF Sales Indicator report but would like to get involved again to receive this updated and improved member benefit then please contact richard.elliethorne@bmf.org.uk.





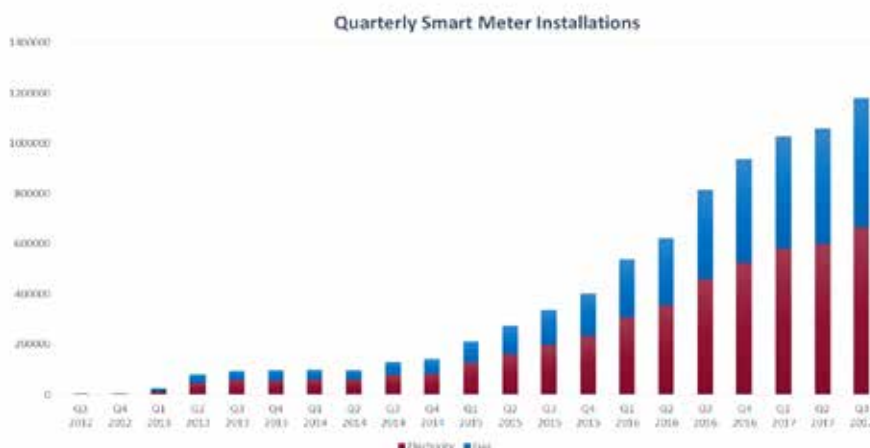
Market Data

Energy & Utilities Alliance data update

Recent data supplied by Energy & Utilities Alliance shows market data to the end of 2017:

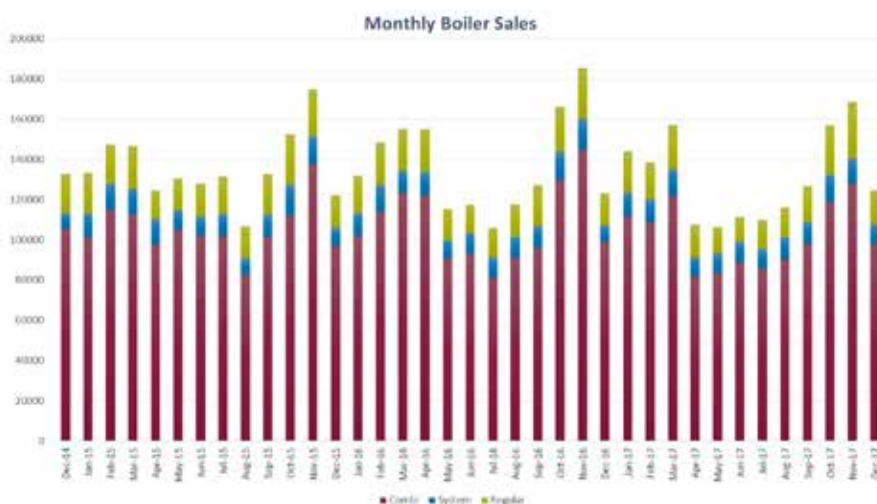
Smart meter installations

- A total of 1,181,188 smart meters were installed in the third quarter of 2017
- In total, 8.2 million smart meters have been installed throughout the UK by the large energy suppliers



Domestic gas boilers

- Sales of domestic gas boilers in December 2017 increased by 1.4% in comparison with December 2016
- Sales for the year to date are 4.9% lower than at the same time last year
- Sales on a moving annual basis are approximately 1.56 million boilers, representing a fall of 4.9%



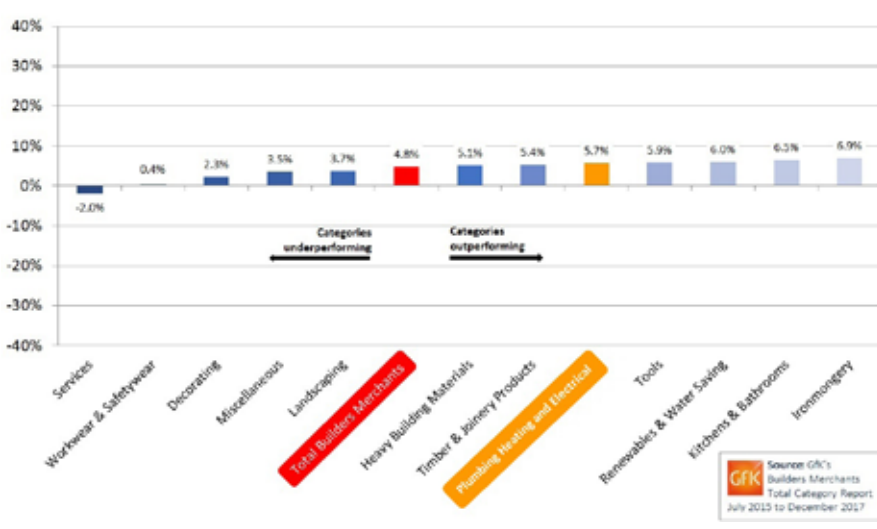
Plumbing & Heating sales contribute to strong finish to 2017

The Builders Merchant Building Index (BMBI) saw strong growth in 2017. Total Q4 2017 sales were up +6.3% on Q4 2016, delivering stronger growth for the quarter than the running average, which helped to push annual growth numbers. Overall, merchant sales in 2017 finished 4.8% ahead of 2016.

Looking at Q4 in detail, a number of smaller product categories assisted the strong finish, notably Plumbing, Heating & Electrical, and Tools (both up by +7.7%), Ironmongery (+7.3%) and Kitchens & Bathrooms (+6.6%).

December slowed in comparison to both Q4 and the annual totals. Growth per trading day grew faster than the annual

12 months Jan 17 to Dec 17 v 12 months Jan 16 to Dec 16



average at +5.7%. Plumbing Heating and Electrical +10.1%, and Kitchens & Bathrooms +8.9% - performed strongly year-on-year as weather reverted

to normal after a warmer and drier December 2017.

For more details visit www.bmbi.co.uk.



Regulations

Check the mark, or be in the dark!

In 2013, the UK Government adopted new European legislation which brought about key changes. The Construction Product Regulation (CPR) made it mandatory for companies to carry the new CE mark on relevant bathroom products.



1. The CE mark guarantees that the product has been assessed and that it is "fit for purpose" and demonstrates "European conformity to a harmonised standard". It does not guarantee that the product is of a high quality.
2. The CPR requires that manufacturers and importers are responsible for the

CE marking and that their products have a type, batch or serial number and technical documentation.

3. If consumers are uncertain regarding the legitimacy of the product, concerns can be alleviated by making sure that the CE mark is on the product packaging or the supporting literature. If this is not the case, raise the issue immediately with your supplier.
4. All products should also be supplied with a Declaration of Performance (DoP) which details actual performance characteristics of the product have been verified. If the DoP is not supplied with the product, then a web reference on the CE label must be stated to enable a digital copy of the DoP to be obtained.

5. The DoP must, at the very least, be available on the manufacturer's website. The ramifications can lead to imprisonment for up to 3 months and/or a fine of up to £5,000 per incident. Bathroom products that fall into this category are:

- Baths for domestic use including whirlpool baths
- Shower enclosures
- Bidets
- Urinals
- WC's
- Shower trays
- Washbasins

6. Failure to comply with the new regulations means a series of penalties can result, such as manufacturers being forced to take remedial actions or withdraw or recall of the product.

For more information please contact the Bathroom Manufacturers Association on **01782 631619** or email **info@bathroom-association.org.uk**.

BMF Cyber Audit Plus Provided by RDS Global

BMF Cyber Audit Plus is designed to help BMF members prepare for the May 2018 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

What are the new General Data Protection Regulations coming into force in May 2018?

GDPR is the new data protection law which will be fully implemented by May 2018. GDPR will change the way in which businesses obtain, store, use and delete data and will make designated internal data controllers, board members and directors more accountable for the existing business processes around data protection.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO), which is the government body behind GDPR have stipulated that non-

compliant companies will be penalised and will have to pay a fine equating to 4% of global turnover.

Free Cyber Risk Assessment for BMF Members RDS will provide all BMF members with a free Cyber Risk Assessment where a series of questions will be completed by the business and RDS will then provide some feedback in regards to next steps. They will also provide more information on the policies and processes the business needs to have to be compliant and avoid any fines following May 2018.

Benefits of Cyber Security from RDS:

- Complete cyber security from one provider
- Safeguard against various types of cyber attack
- Reinforce information security
- Demonstrate safety of customers', supplier's and employees' valuable personal data
- Reduce business insurance premiums
- Full understanding and implementation of cyber security technology & GDPR
- Full technical support

To book your free Cyber Risk Assessment contact RDS Global on **0330 2211244** or email **sales@rds.global**.





Training

Trade Supplier Apprenticeship



The BMF and the Electrical Distributors Association (EDA) have jointly championed the development of a brand new, industry-specific Trade Supplier Apprentice Standard. It is the first apprenticeship to be designed for our industry by experts in our industry, and is set to become the sector's primary Level 2 qualification with employers in 2018.

The Trade Supplier Level 2 Apprenticeship Standard was launched to more than fifteen training providers who will deliver the training programme across the UK. The new Standard is offered to builders merchants through BMF Apprenticeships Plus.

Trade Supplier Level 2 was developed as part of the government's Trailblazer initiative. This encouraged groups of employers to work together to create robust apprenticeships for their own sector, to ensure that people have up-to-date workplace skills that are fully relevant to business and industry.

Speaking at the launch, Richard Ellithorne, BMF Membership Services Director said "Merchants and other trade suppliers play a vital role in ensuring an efficient flow of goods and services between manufacturers and their skilled trade customer base, but this is the first time that an apprenticeship has been designed

to meet the industry's specific needs. It is a huge step forward, and I would like to thank all those who gave their time and energy to ensure this new apprenticeship delivers the skills and knowledge needed by new recruits to our industry."

John Henry, Director of BMF Apprenticeships Plus (the BMF's Apprenticeship Training Agency) said "This employer-led qualification will give young people entering the industry an excellent grounding in merchandising and will raise the bar in terms of skills and knowledge at an early point in their careers. Having been in close communication with many businesses, it is clear that the merchandising sector has been waiting for this new apprenticeship and I am confident of a significant take up by employers wishing to recruit and train new entrants and existing colleagues."

Commenting on the collaborative development process, Margaret Fitzsimons, EDA Director said "Created by wholesalers for wholesalers, this new entry-level apprenticeship reflects the substantial commitment and knowledge sharing from across the building, timber and joinery, kitchen installation and electro-technical sectors. It has been a pleasure to work with similar trade organisations and their members to pool our significant wholesaling experience."

Crawford Knott of Hawk Training, an Ofsted-accredited outstanding training provider added "Boosting the level of skills and productivity in the UK is vitally important, even more so as we move into the post-Brexit era. Apprenticeship standards like this one will enable employers in the sector to harness new talent and support the development of industry-specific skills."

The new Trade Supplier Apprenticeship Standard will replace the Trade Business Service framework apprenticeship, formerly used by merchants. The new Standard is far more closely aligned with the merchant working environment.

Trade Supplier Apprentices may work on the trade counter, or they can specialise in other roles in the trade business environment including sales, purchasing account management, logistics and administration.

The new apprenticeship received approval from the Skills Funding Agency and OFQUAL in autumn 2017, and is eligible for funding under the new Levy system.

To find out more about the Trade Supplier Level 2 Apprenticeship standard or BMF training please contact James Spillane james.spillane@bmf.org.uk or call 02456 854980.



Events

BMF Plumbing & Heating Forums

Autumn Forum

At the BMF Plumbing & Heating Forum on 26 October 2017, Chairman Keith Jones and Paul Turner (Strategic Director, Wolseley) welcomed 40 members to Wolseley UK in Leamington. Presentations included:

- The Boiler and Heating Market – Trends and Current Data Update by Stewart Clements, HHIC
- Honeywell – Controlling the Market! by Martin Wilson, Honeywell
- BIM Technology – The Change, The Fear and The Perception for Manufacturers and Merchants by Prabhat Shikotra, BAM Construction
- BMF Training Review – Key Areas within our Industry by Alex Clifford, BMF
- The BMF Apprenticeship Plus Program by John Henry of BMF Apprenticeships Plus
- Cyber Security – by Andy Flinn, Director, RDS Global

An open forum followed the presentations, then a networking lunch and tour of the Wolseley facilities. Chairman Keith Jones thanked Wolseley for their great hospitality at the Forum.



Spring Forum

The next BMF Plumbing & Heating Forum will take place on 24 May at Grundfos in Leighton Buzzard. The agenda will include:

- Welcome by Keith Jones, BMF P&H Forum Chairman
- Introduction & welcome to Grundfos by Diane Willis, Grundfos UK

- The Boiler and Heating Market – Trends and Current Data Update by Stewart Clements, HHIC
- Future GFK data on P&H by Richard Frankom, GFK
- P&H Distribution – Changing Times – The Future? by David Pochin. (PHG) and Managing Director, Robert Pochin Ltd
- Chartered Institute of Plumbing & Heating Engineering Review by Tim Sainty, CIPHE Director
- Change and opportunity - Grafton Group Member – Plumbase by Mark Bradley, MD and Rik Pepper, RD Plumbase.

The forum will close with a networking lunch, followed by the official opening of the BMF Centre of Excellence at Grundfos. For more information visit www.bmf.org.uk/events or contact Alex Clifford at alex.clifford@bmf.org.uk.

Biggest ever BMF Burns Supper raises £5,000 for charity

The BMF raised £5,000 for the BMF's nominated charity, Variety UK, at its largest ever annual Burns Supper held at Edinburgh International Conference Centre on 26 January.

The event, which celebrates the life and works of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns, is now an established fixture for BMF Members north and south of the border. 340 people attended this year, including Marley Plumbing (Aliaxis), Graham Plumbers Merchants and ACO. The programme included Grace and haggis address by Patrick Hayes MC, address to the Lassies by Robert Wilson, FMB, reply for the Lassies by Lucia Di Stazio, MRA Marketing and Immortal Memory by Ian Glass. Guests then enjoyed dancing to the Scraggy Cats and 7 Piece Pipe Band.



John Newcomb, BMF CEO said: "Once again the BMF's Scottish region has organised a fantastic event. Our thanks go to sponsors Crystal, Kerridge, Keystone, Lundie Creative, Marley Plumbing & Drainage, Monument Tools, Urfic, and to all those who donated raffle prizes for their generous support. We thank everyone who helped to raise such a fantastic sum for Variety."

Please visit www.bmf.org.uk/events for details of forthcoming BMF events.

BMF Members' Day

the future
BELONGS TO THE BOLD

Britain's building industry is facing revolutionary change. Only those businesses that have the imagination and conviction to be bold will grab customers' attention. This year we invite our members to explore new ideas and consider if they are ready to meet the future with confidence.

Members' Day will be held at St George's Park on 26-27 September 2018. For details of speakers and to book your place visit www.bmf.org.uk/events.



Events

Armitage Shanks celebrate 200 years at Birmingham Town Hall

One of Britain's oldest businesses, Armitage Shanks, culminated its bicentenary celebrations with a Big Birthday Bash at Grade 1-listed building Birmingham Town Hall for over 500 employees and customers.

The event was hosted by Patrick Kielty and guests were entertained by acts including Britain's Got Talent finalists, Escala, magician David Penn, and a grand finale by Beverley Knight.

Poet Laureate for Birmingham, Matt Windle, was on hand to read a specially commissioned poem on the history of Armitage Shanks and its local significance. One hundred colleagues were honoured for their service and dedication to the business throughout the evening.



Originally founded by Thomas Bond in the Staffordshire village of Armitage, Armitage Shanks has produced millions of items over the last two centuries that have adorned UK bathrooms in homes and in public spaces, including offices, pubs, shops, restaurants, schools, hospitals and sports stadiums.

Armitage Shanks continually celebrated its bicentenary throughout 2016 and 2017, using its birthday year as an opportunity to raise over £200,000 for its charity partners,

Bowel and Cancer Research, as well as other projects local to its factory sites.

Torsten Tuerling, CEO of Ideal Standard International, said: "Armitage Shanks has fantastic foundations in the bathroom sector, thanks to its 200 years of experience, alongside 150 years more across Europe through its parent company Ideal Standard. However, the business has never been one to focus on the past and has no intention to rest on its laurels. This bicentenary is just the start and Armitage Shanks will continue to create hardworking and effective products that utilise the best design solutions to deliver elegant and attractive designs.

Stephen Ewer, Managing Director of Ideal Standard UK Cluster, added: "Our anniversary has shown just how much we need to be proud of and just how much this Great British brand is capable of achieving."

FEST Field Trip - Paris 6-8 September 2017

More than 30 wholesalers from 10 European countries took part in the FEST (European Federation for the Sanitary and Heating Wholesale Trade) Field Trip to Paris in September 2017, including representatives from the BMF. Delegates visited a number of businesses around the city and benefitted from a unique networking opportunity amidst industry colleagues.

The group commenced with a visit to Orvif, an independent wholesaler operating from a central distribution site in Orly. The founder's grandson, Benjamin Roux, explained operations from the Orly site, then showed the group round a branch at St. Denis. The day ended with dinner at a French restaurant in Montmartre.

Day two began with a trip to La Halle de Pantin, Saint Gobain's landmark Paris trading site and home to all of its major brands associated with building materials



distribution, including plumbing, heating, electrical and tiles, as well as partnership businesses offering tool hire.

The group then visited Au Forum du Bâtiment, another independent, who trades from a fully-automated warehouse and distributes next day to numerous destinations across France.

To close the day, the group saw the sights of Paris before enjoying a formal dinner with fabulous views across the city, in the Eiffel Tower restaurant, kindly sponsored by supplier Atlantic.

The group's final visit was to the flagship showroom of Duravit, France to see the newly refurbished displays. M. Albrecht von der Gröben, Duravit's Head of Export, presented a potted company history followed by a full design and technical brief about the company's latest products.

Fest

56th FEST Congress 13-15 September 2018

For the first time the FEST Congress will take place in Vienna in 2018 with the focus on "How to stay a successful company in the digital age". The Congress will be held at Le Meridien Hotel in Vienna. Top-class speakers will cover topics around the digitalisation in trade, digital business models, generation X and Y and the future of trade.

For more information please visit www.festassociation.eu/230-2





Trade Shows



UK University/ Apprenticeship Search – 19 October

The BMF attended the UK University/Apprentice Search at Edgbaston Stadium in Birmingham on 19 October 2017.

The one day event was attended by 3,500 students who were making up their mind on whether to attend university or embark on an apprenticeship. It was refreshing to see the long-term bias of universities over apprenticeship is starting to diminish, and earning while you're learning on an apprenticeship is being held in the same regard as academic study.

Bathroom and Kitchen Business Conference – 16-17 October

The BMF attended the annual Bathroom and Kitchen Business Conference at the Belfry, Wishaw on 16-17 October, organised by the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA). This year the theme was Creating Opportunity Out of Change.

The conference, hosted by BBC Midlands Today's Nick Owen included the following speakers:

- Rob Brown – Business Networking
- Stephen Kay – WRAS – Compliance across Europe.
- Peter Adkins – The Law
- Jane Blakeborough – Culture & Demographics
- Dr Peter Bonfield OBE – Bonfield Report
- Joe Lynam – Brexit



The day of presentations was followed by the annual Gala Dinner and Media Awards.

The 2018 B&K Conference will be held at Vale Resort, Vale of Glamorgan on 15-16 October.



BMF Pavilion at UK Construction Week, NEC, Birmingham

Following the success of the 2017 show, The BMF will have a branded pavilion again at the Build Show, as part of UK Construction Week, with a bigger presence and networking hub.

Last year's BMF Pavilion exhibitors included: EasyTrim, Rawlplug, ClicBox, Glen Castings, Sales-i, Werner, Wykamol and Intact Software on the BMF Pavilion.

Members can benefit from a 20% discount on stand bookings.

Enquire today to:

- Meet and do business across the three trade days
- Get 1 to 1 meetings with your key clients via the Hosted Buyer Programme

- Benefit from a joint marketing campaign by the Build Show, UK Construction Week, and the BMF
- Choose a shell scheme or space only stand

This is THE place to hear industry leaders debate, gain invaluable free advice, CPD workshops and thousands of new innovative products all under one roof.

For further information visit www.ukconstructionweek.com.

To reserve exhibition space contact Dale Nicholson at Media 10 on **0203 225 5217** or email dale.nicholson@media-ten.com.



BMF launches three more Regional Centres

The BMF has launched three more Regional Centres of Excellence recently – at Worcester Bosch in Worcester, Garador in Yeovil and PageGroup in London.

The centre at Worcester Bosch, UK market leader in domestic boilers, is their flagship training academy, which will serve BMF members in the West Midlands. The 2,000m² academy, which has just reopened following a £3.5m redevelopment, offers extensive practical training facilities for Worcester's installers in addition to the excellent meeting accommodation.



Nick Fothergill, National Training Manager at Worcester Bosch (pictured) said: "We are proud to be recognised as a Regional Centre of Excellence by the BMF. This status will strengthen our relationship with BMF members and enable Worcester Bosch Group to further promote excellence and best practice throughout the industry."

John Newcomb, BMF CEO, said: "These are fantastic centres and we are extremely grateful to Garador and Worcester Bosch for opening these to our members. We look forward to holding further South West and West Midlands meetings at these centres, along with our own training courses for members in the regions."

The BMF now have 18 of these Regional Centres, which provide members with appropriate training and meeting venues in various locations around the UK.

For more details visit

www.bmf.org.uk/BMF/Membership/RegionalCentresofExcellence.



Dates for your Diary

April

- 17 BMF East Midlands regional meeting, Keystone, Swadlincote
- 17 BMF Northern Ireland Health and Safety Sub-Committee, venue TBC
- 18 BMF Finance Forum, BMF, Coventry
- 24 BMF Anniversary Parliamentary Reception, Strangers' Room, House of Commons (invitation only), sponsored by UK Construction Week
- 25 BMF Marketing Forum, Dulux Academy, Slough

May

- 2 BMF Technology Forum, Mimecast, London
- 3 BMF Transport & Distribution Forum, BMF, Coventry
- 15 BMF Northern Ireland regional meeting
- 16 BMF Yorkshire regional meeting, venue TBC
- 23 BMF HR Forum, BMF, Coventry
- 24 **BMF P & H Forum, Grundfos, Leighton Buzzard**

June

- 7-10 VADO Rally – England to Copenhagen

- 14-17 NMBS Conference, Lake Maggiore, Italy

- 21 BMF Health & Safety Forum, BMF, Coventry

July

- 12 Bob Beaver Memorial Shoot, Royal Berkshire Shooting Ground

- 13-14 BMF Mastermerchant, Ambleside

September

- 13-15 56th FEST Congress, Vienna

- 19 BMF Marketing Forum, BMF, Coventry

- 26-27 BMF Members' Day, St George's Park, Burton on Trent

October

- 4 BMF Scotland regional meeting, venue TBC

- 9-11 UK Construction Week, NEC, Birmingham

- 11 Young Merchant Conference, Midlands venue TBC (invitation only)

- 15-16 **B & K Conference, Vale Resort, Vale of Glamorgan**

November

- 1 BMF North East regional meeting, venue TBC

- 6 BMF P & H Forum, Geberit/Twyfords, Warwick

For more details about each BMF event visit www.bmf.org.uk/events.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on this new newsletter. If you have any comments about this edition or feedback for future editions please contact Christine Wall at christine.wall@bmf.org.uk.