

A collage of four circular images showing construction scenes: a shovel pouring concrete, a brick wall, a worker carrying lumber, and a wooden frame under construction.

*September 2021*

# The demand for building materials

A guide for builders and DIYers to  
help keep projects on track



[www.bmf.org.uk](http://www.bmf.org.uk)



@bmf\_merchants



Builders Merchants Federation



@BuildersMerchantsFederation





## The **current** view

“Across the building industry, the sheer demand for building products is slowing deliveries.

We’ve produced this guide to help explain some of the reasons behind the surge in demand, the products most likely to be affected – and to give some ideas on how you can work with your BMF merchant to work around these issues.

We are seeing unprecedented demand in all areas – refurbishment, new homes and commercial buildings.

Your BMF merchant is working hard to manage product demand and supply, The challenges faced in the first half of the year are likely to continue into early 2022, but rest assured that your merchant will work closely with you to help keep your projects on track.

We hope you find this information useful.

Please follow the BMF to keep up-to-date with the latest developments.”



[www.bmf.org.uk](http://www.bmf.org.uk)



[@bmf\\_merchants](https://twitter.com/bmf_merchants)



[Builders Merchants Federation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/builders-merchants-federation)



[@BuildersMerchantsFederation](https://www.facebook.com/BuildersMerchantsFederation)

**John Newcomb**  
CEO of the BMF





# What are the reasons for the surge in demand?

Your BMF merchant member, and building product manufacturers, are addressing factors from other areas, which together are making a challenging situation even more difficult.

## These include:



**A shortage of HGV drivers** – manufacturers are struggling to get the drivers to bring materials into branches nationwide.



**Shipping issues** – the price of shipping has risen massively this year. The availability of space on ships is also an issue, along with the closures and reduced working of ports around the world.



**Staffing** – like all industries, builders' merchants and manufacturers are balancing high numbers of staff isolating due to Covid, as well as the summer holiday period too.



**Home improvements** – in the pandemic we have seen more people investing in their homes.

Make sure you're following the BMF's social media channels, for regular updates.



@bmf\_merchants



Builders Merchants Federation



@BuildersMerchants Federation

# Some products in short supply

According to the **Construction Leadership Council's Product Availability Group** report (August 2021) the products in shortest supply are:



Timber



Cement



Roofing products



Bricks



Blocks



Insulation



Cable management systems

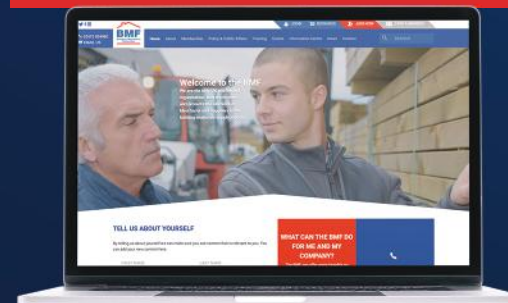


Steel



The BMF has built a **new online area**, where you can access all the latest information on product demand. It also includes a detailed list of the latest products in short supply.

To view the site, please visit:  
[www.bmf.org.uk/productavailability](http://www.bmf.org.uk/productavailability)





# What **steps** can you take?

It's a challenging situation, but there are steps you can take to help balance the issue.

**They include:**

- 1 Plan ahead** – it's worth pre-ordering products in advance. Building material manufacturers' lead times are longer, and placing orders earlier will help absorb some of those longer waits.
- 2 Consider other products** – if it's proving difficult to get a particular product, work with you BMF merchant member, and your client too, to consider other alternatives.
- 3 Be flexible** – build in work patterns that are flexible, to adapt to the challenges. This can include accepting deliveries out of normal hours.

