



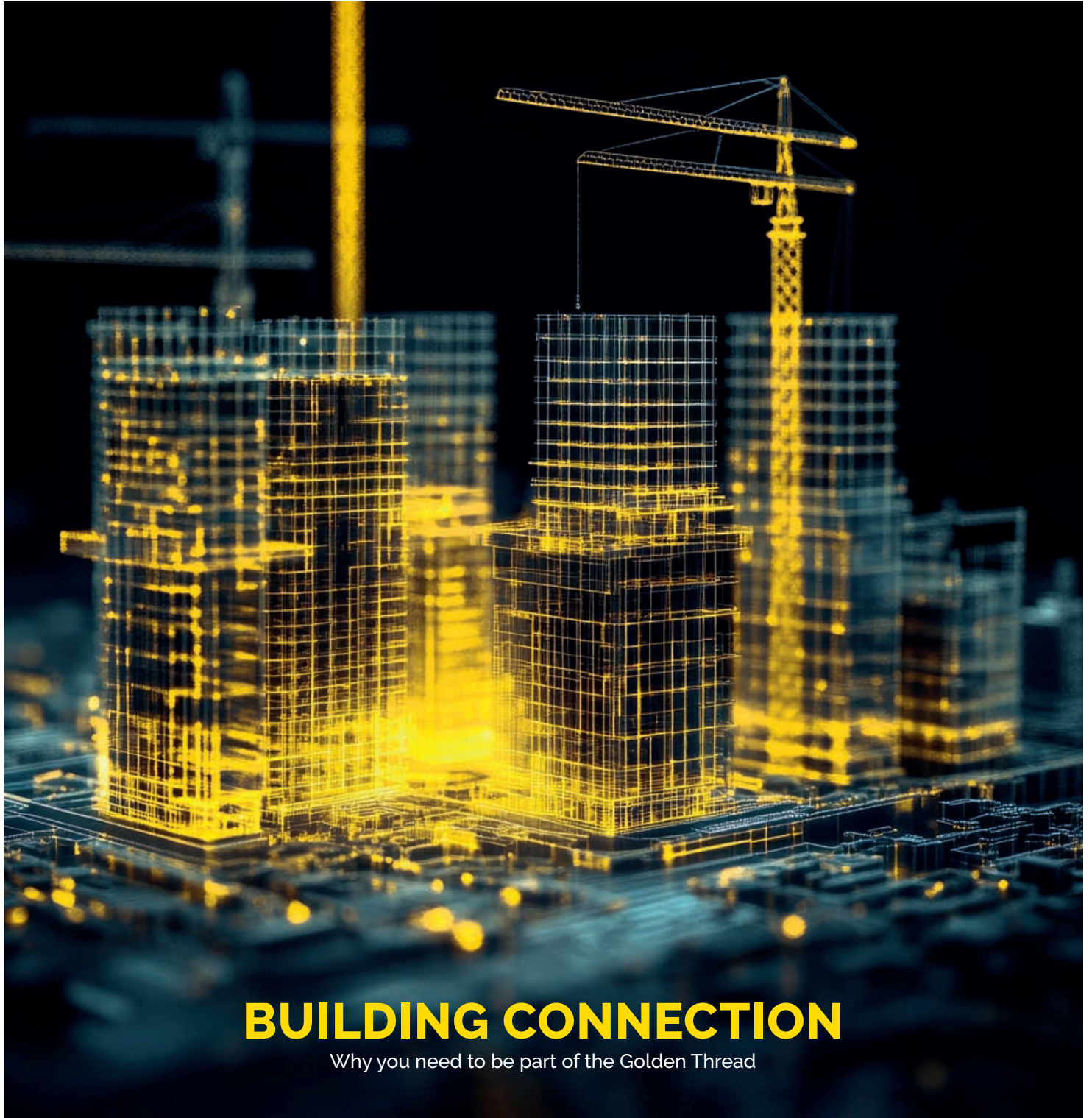
Architectural  
Ironmongery  
Journal

WINTER 2024



INSIDE

- 2025 trends
- Atlantis The Royal
- GAI Chief Exec vision



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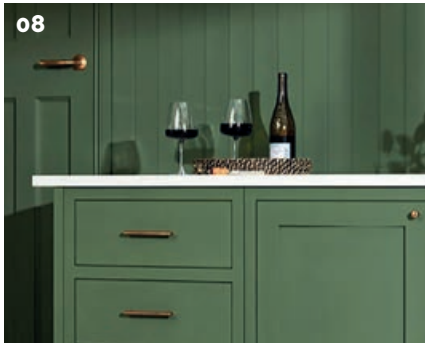
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**EDITORIAL PANEL:**

Kaz Spiewakowski  
President

Rachael Bliss  
Chief executive  
Email: rachael.bliss@gai.org.uk

Marc Sanderson  
Head of marketing  
Email: marc.sanderson@gai.org.uk

Douglas Masterson  
Technical manager  
Tel: +44 (0) 7469 141657  
Email: douglas.masterson@gai.org.uk

**DESIGN AND PRODUCTION:**

Atom Publishing  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7490 5595  
www.atompublishing.co.uk

**EDITOR:**

Nicky Roger  
Tel: +44 (0) 7704 336835  
Email: nicky.roger@atompublishing.co.uk

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**

David Smith  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7490 5595  
Email: david.smith@atompublishing.co.uk

**ART EDITOR:**

Heather Rugeley



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Updates  
Projects  
Standards  
Events

# Digest



**TOP RIGHT:** Hendel & Hendel's Brokk Collection combining aesthetic and tactile appeal

**ABOVE:** ASSA ABLOY's Close-Motion® door closer, suitable for communal spaces benefiting from quiet door closure

## Door hardware impresses interior design judges

Door hardware swept the floor at the recent SBID awards winning both product of the year categories. ASSA ABLOY won for its Close-Motion® door closer in the contract category and Hendel & Hendel won the residential category for its Brokk Collection of cabinet hardware. The ASSOY ABLOY product won thanks to its "unique configuration of components that solves multiple challenges within a building".

The Close-Motion® door closer features a soft-closing mechanism that allows doors to slide quietly and securely into the lock. Behind this is the Close-Motion® technology, which improves the door's motion sequence: close quickly - dampen gently - close securely. Its quiet performance lends itself to the tourism and

hotel industry where self-closing doors with special operating comfort are in demand, as well as private apartment buildings where it prevents slamming doors in hallways caused by draughts. It's also useful in healthcare settings where quiet is valued around patient rooms, treatment rooms and centrally used areas.

Hendel & Hendel's Brokk Collection was hailed for its engineered design that was seen as "as tactile as it is aesthetic". Judges said: "Adding depth and visual appeal, the stepped backplate frames the intricate shotblast texture. Cohesively designed for the backplate, the bold circular bar features wrap-around clasps which come to life across the seven luxurious finishes."

## Clever stuff: AT awards shine light on innovative thinking

A mixed community build, a primary school and a satellite test facility were among the winners at this year's AT Awards. The awards from the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists celebrate outstanding achievements in architectural technology from students and practitioners.

The Awards for Excellence in Architectural Technology are divided into three categories based on project size. The winner of the small to medium project was Hope Rise by ZED PODS Ltd: an innovative mixed community build in Bristol providing accommodation for young adults. This net zero-carbon residential development of 11 homes creatively uses the air rights above an operational car park to create new homes without displacing existing infrastructure. They are the first factory-built steel-frame modular homes of their kind to be completed in the UK. Hope Rise also won the coveted Project of the Year 2024 Award.

In the Medium to Large category Thornhill Primary School by ECD Architects took the

win. It is an expansion project that saw the construction of a new Passivhaus Certified building, together with a refurbishment of the existing host structure, enabling both new and old to be holistically brought together.

The Large to Mega winning project was the National Satellite Test Facility, at Harwell Science & Innovation Campus. Comprising six enormous chambers to replicate the extreme conditions that a satellite encounters, from launch to orbiting deep space, the project included offsite manufacture as well as high standards of technical detailing design and almost incomprehensible construction tolerances of 1.5 nanometres.

**View all the Awards, finalists and winners at [architecturaltechnology.com/atawards.html](https://architecturaltechnology.com/atawards.html). The Awards reopen on 4 February 2025.**

**BELOW:** The Hope Rise community housing



### Frank Allart offers glimpse of new collection

**Frank Allart is preparing to introduce a new collection. The FLUTE range includes meticulously detailed cabinet knobs, door knobs, rosettes and lever handles all designed to work together for a cohesive look. The firm says it's had an "enthusiastic response" to product samples and the collection will be available in January 2025.**

### Deadline nears for views on architect code of conduct

Architects and interested parties have until 12 December to provide feedback on proposed revisions to the code of conduct for architects from The Architects Registration Board (ARB). The regulator opened a consultation on the draft code in September which has been informed partly by the findings of the final Grenfell Inquiry report.

The revised Code is designed to act as a positive statement on professionalism and ethics. It is founded on six standards: honesty and integrity, public interest, communication and collaboration, competence, professional practice and respect. ARB will analyse consultation responses and finalise the new code early in the new year.

# Your place or mine?

Who takes ownership of the specification of intumescent products, asks **Russell Smith?**

**We all know the importance of the** interaction between ironmongery and the intumescent, but who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that both components are suitably matched, specified and installed?

Once the architectural practice has produced the required specification the job will go out to competitive tender and perhaps this becomes the first hurdle: what do you include or leave out to make sure your tender is 'competitive'?

If the architectural ironmonger completes a full and detailed schedule this will not only



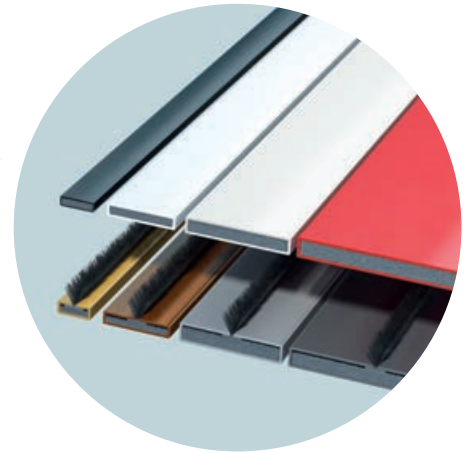
**“The ironmonger must correctly match the two items together to know that suitable evidence allowed for the items to be used together or flag up inconsistencies and put forward alternatives”**

include the specified hardware but also allow for additional items. These items include intumescent pads and wraps that may form part of the fire test evidence for the specified hinges, lock sets, concealed closing devices, letterplates and spy viewers for example, all of which can fall within the category of needing intumescent to meet the requirements of the fire test evidence. The question raised is then: does this keep us competitive or do we exclude these items and trust that the door set manufacturer will allow for the ironmongery protection intumescent within its quotation?

If the door manufacturer holds suitable fire test evidence to support the specified doorset including the ironmongery suite the architect has specified, then at this stage they could swap out the intumescent protection as dictated by the fire test evidence they hold, and this would still allow for a fire tested solution to be delivered to site. The doorset manufacturer takes responsibility for the overall package and the ironmonger loses a chunk of income from the tender.

If the door manufacturer cannot provide this evidence, then they are reliant on bringing in the required ironmongery suite along with the appropriate intumescent protection. At the tender stage the ironmonger must have had to correctly match the two items together to know that suitable evidence allowed for the specified items to be used together or to flag up inconsistencies and put forward alternatives that would provide the required level of fire resistance.

Trying to keep within the guidelines of 'good practice' and maintaining a level playing field becomes very challenging. We all know

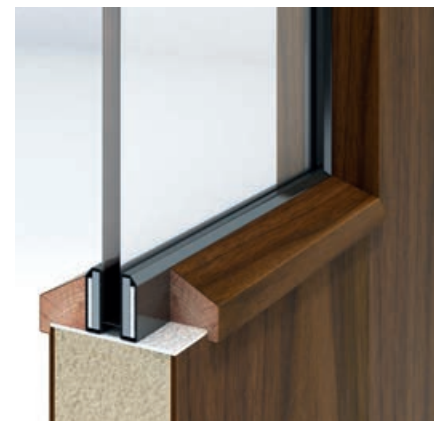


how time consuming the tender process is and the potential pitfalls that happen: value engineering and breaking specifications are probably high up the list when your tender is unsuccessful.

Being an intumescent seal manufacturer and supplier, we are removed from the tender stage but still need to provide cost effective and fire tested components to support the ironmonger in today's marketplace. ♦

**Russell Smith is technical manager at Mann McGowan**

**ABOVE AND BELOW: Mann McGowan intumescent seals**





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# What's trending?

What hardware styles can we expect to see climbing up the specifying chart in 2025? Industry experts share their predictions

**The Society of British & International Interior Design (SBID)** industry quarterly survey, which explores spending trends, investment, and influences to predict trends in interiors, has identified a shift from investment in the hospitality sector towards residential projects for the year ahead.

Its founder and CEO Vanessa Brady OBE explains. "We have found from our research that investment into scheduled updates of five year refurbishment upgrades in hotels for replacement products is being cut-back to bare essentials in three star or less hotels, or simply reduced, which is often the case

**TOP:** Art Deco is back en vogue as seen in HAF@John Planck Ltd's work in the spa at The OWO



**ABOVE:** the choice of finishes in PVD handles is allowing boundaries to expand





when uncertainty due to political influences generates a shudder in the financial markets which impacts on investors."

Brady also points to more spend on homes thanks to the increase in working from home and people choosing to entertain more at home over going out. "The workplace shift led to spare bedrooms and dining rooms being reallocated to home-work-space for Zoom environments and homeowners at all price levels spending more of their disposable income on their homes for personal comfort. And people spending more time in their homes entertaining means that to entertain costs less and therefore the home is benefiting from additional investment."

What does that translate to in terms of hardware? The SBID trend report shows that when it comes to metals, nickel is the new chrome, while burnished brass ironmongery for handles and accessories take the lead in residential kitchens and public space washrooms.

And, Brady says the shift to black brassware in the bathroom continues and is for the first time outselling chrome.

"Brass is still huge although matt, burnished and antique finishes are still the most popular," she's says, adding "however, we are also seeing polished brass and detailed texture in metals emerging with a deco influence beginning to overtake the knurled and rib texture finishes."

The continued popularity of brass and the rise in black matt hardware is also predicted by high end British hardware manufacturer Croft. It also expects to see a demand for textured hardware, especially in homes, and predicts a continued trend for contrasting metallic accents with the warmth of darker surfaces and cabinets.

Tom Planck at John Planck Hardware says for 2025, the trends appear to be sector-dependant. "In hospitality, we're seeing the continuation of specialist finishes being popular and in demand, finishes such as dark bronze, satin and antique brass," he says adding "but also, the utilisation of a combination of different finishes for differing areas where interior 'themes' are designed and created.

"Residential is still very much dependent on the specific project and building with its location also playing a part. Black is still hanging in there with some popularity. Commercial projects are moving towards these finishes also and whilst stainless steel remains popular, with the resilience and variety of PVD finishes widely available on a lot of the designs, boundaries are being pushed more and more in this sector." ♦

**"Brass is still huge although matt, burnished and antique finishes are still the most popular"**

**VANESSA BRADY**



**FAR LEFT:** Burnished brass will be popular in residential settings

**LEFT:** Expect to see a demand in textured hardware, especially metallic

**BELOW:** Black matt will continue its run of popularity

**BOTTOM:** Metallic contrasting with dark colours



# In excess

Tasked with 'redefining luxury' Allgood knew something special was required when it was asked to specify for Dubai's most extravagant hotel. AJJ reports

**When it comes to high end hotels who does it better than Dubai?** The city's hotels are the epitome of extravagance so imagine receiving a brief to specify architectural ironmongery that 'redefined luxury'. That was the challenge for Allgood on Atlantis The Royal (ATR).

ATR is situated on the Palm Jumeirah and is inside the top 10 of the The World's 50 Best Hotels 2024 – the only hotel in the Middle East to do so. It also secured the top spot in the International category of the GAI/RIBA Specification Awards. Described as "big, bold and in your face" by the World's Best 50 Hotels it is home to 795 rooms and suites, 17 restaurants and bars, 17 boutiques, a sprawling 32,300 square foot wellness space, and no fewer than 90 swimming pools – including Cloud 22 perched high on top of the sky bridge. Signature penthouses offer views of the Dubai skyline or the Arabian Sea; 44 of the suites include private infinity pools.





“We delivered a wide range of ironmongery including bespoke items, that meet the exceedingly high standard required for a project of this nature”

**STEWART LAUDER**

Designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF), interior design was by GA Design and architectural hardware by Allgood. GA Design says it was tasked with creating a “seamless and compelling narrative that could resolve numberless planning, design and technical challenges”.

That narrative is centred on the notion of water and water-based moments throughout the property. Inspired by the Bedouins of the Arabian desert the resort celebrates water as a precious commodity with water features, sculptures, and elements throughout the property. This includes three aquariums home to 7200 marine animals and a jellyfish aquarium home to 4,000 moon fish.

The water theme is also present in terms of reflection and weightlessness, which are embodied in the destination stairs.

The bedrooms and suites are more understated with the water theme used in a refined and abstract way, becoming more dramatic the higher up the building guests go. From the gentle blues of the Seascape room, to the shimmering pearls of a Horizon Penthouse, all the way up to the dramatic hues of orange and red coral coloured walls of the Panoramic Penthouse.

#### Complex specification

For the ironmongery specification the scale was a massive undertaking. With GAD as the anchor designer, Allgood collaborated internationally with the likes of Sybille de Margerie in Paris, and Jeffery Beers in NYC, as well as IBI in Toronto. This complex task evolved over eight years and included the specification of not just door hardware but also access control solutions, automatic doors, washroom products, and some unique and bespoke items.

The project came in stages, with the first seeing 400 bespoke flat-cranked pull handles designed and specified for use in the guest rooms.

Following the success of this initial stage, Allgood was asked to continue its collaboration with GA Design on the hotel and resort’s public areas, with a special emphasis on the main ballroom.

Stewart Lauder, Allgood managing director, said: “Working on ATR showcased Allgood’s commitment to quality and highly skilled craftsmanship on a landmark project for the region. We delivered a wide range of ironmongery, including bespoke items, that meet the exceedingly high standard required for a project of this nature.

“The intricate crystal-topped pull handle (see box on next page) combines function and elegance with every detail carefully considered. Taking the architect’s initial sketch, our team set about making the vision a reality with the design calling for a mix of contemporary and traditional ironmongery styles. ▶

**ABOVE LEFT:** ATR has almost 800 rooms  
**OPPOSITE PAGE:** The Cloud 22 sky bridge pool  
**BELOW:** The ‘floating stairs’ and one aquarium



“For the crystal tops there was no precedent in the ironmongery industry. The crystals were completed and fine polished in Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter”

“This level of care, attention to detail and expertise ensured that the design aesthetics remained uninterrupted throughout the building.”

ATR wanted to redefine luxury, which is no mean feat in Dubai, so right from the first conversations, Allgood knew something special was required. The emphasis of this project was collaboration from the start. So Allgood worked closely the whole design team to create a true statement piece, worthy of one of the world’s most luxurious destinations. ◆

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The crystal-topped handle  
**BELOW:** Water is the hotel’s theme



## THE CRYSTAL TOPPED PULL HANDLE

The concept for the crystal-topped pull handle which now adorns the ATR’s 5500mm tall, 275kg ballroom doors came from a sketch by GA Design. An imposing 1500mm pull handle for the main entrance doors complements their ultra-luxurious design aesthetic. The vision was a standout piece made from brass with a gold finish and fluted in design. Each pull was to be topped with a beautiful finial-cut crystal.

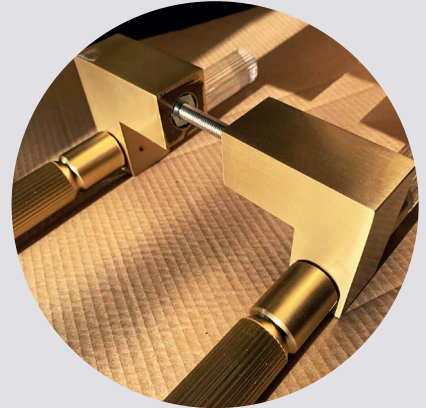
Within a week, Allgood’s in-house design team had worked up a 3D model and started the technical process of making the concept a reality. The design called for a mix of contemporary and traditional ironmongery styles. The crystal top is very much a specialist item. This set several challenges.

### ● Challenge 1: Brass pull handle

A 1200mm solid brass pull handle would have added too much weight to the door. However, the handle had to withstand the forces needed to open 3500mm doors with a minimal number of fixing points. The solution was in the fluting. Using CAD drawings, Allgood created a fluted design that not only delivered the aesthetic needs but used the fluting itself to strengthen the brass tube.

### ● Challenge 2: Angular node

The sharp angular nodes had to contain the fixings for the handles, as well as hold the main brass handles. These flat edges meant a whole new approach was needed, hiding grub screws and designing a spindle that could meet the demands of these brass behemoths.



### ● Challenge 3: The crystal top

Arguably the greatest challenge was the crystal top. As with all the elements of the handle, once Allgood has completed the technical specification and engineering design, it assessed the skills and experiences needed to manufacture them. Working with brass on this scale and complexity required a specialist partner. Allgood commissioned BrassArt from Stourbridge in the West Midlands, who also had a patented gold finish that was perfect for this.

For the crystal, there was no precedent in the ironmongery industry. With Stourbridge also famous for its glassware, BrassArt knew a firm that might be up for this challenge. The crystals were completed and fine polished in Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter, a stone’s throw from Allgood’s main operation. The crystal was handmade, hand cut out of lead crystal and had to be clear.

As a means of future-proofing the product, Allgood engineered these to be ‘socketed’ with a bespoke brass collar fit to the bottom of the crystal and then grub screw held in place. In the unlikely event that the crystal is damaged, it can be easily replaced without having to remove the pull handle.

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# How a door becomes a fire door

Working fire doors are a prerequisite for fire safety, but what differentiates them from regular doors? **Kirk Smith** offers the technical lowdown

**From components and construction to** features and function, there are several clear distinctions between regular doors and fire doors.

## Place

Whereas regular doors are often placed throughout a building on accessibility or aesthetic merit, fire doors are strategically positioned to compartmentalise areas of the structure - such as hallways and stairwells - and are designed to help direct occupants through safe escape routes whilst also providing them with valuable time to make their way out of the building. Despite their similar appearance, regular doors are usually thinner at 35mm, while fire doors are either 44mm or 54mm thick depending on its fire rating.

## Components

When opened, fire doors provide a means of escape. And when closed, they form a barrier to stop the spread of fire and smoke. To be able to do this, the main panel of the door (also known as the door leaf) is constructed from fire resistant materials that help to prevent the door from warping or collapsing when exposed to high temperatures. Nonetheless, for a fire door to become effective, it must comprise of more than just the leaf, and will include:



- The frame
- Intumescent fire - and if required for certification - smoke seals
- Glazing (although this is not necessary)
- Signage
- Door hardware, such as hinges, door closers, locks and latches

Fire doors must work in tandem with each of these components. Intumescent fire and smoke seals for example, frame the edges of the fire door and are chemically

designed to expand into the frame when exposed to temperatures beyond 200°C. In doing so, the seals close the gaps between the frame and the door itself, eliminating any possibility of fire - and if required, smoke - from passing through.

## Operation

From an operational viewpoint, fire doors work differently than regular doors too. Fire door hardware is indispensable to fully

operational doorsets, where during a fire incident, an open door is rendered useless. To be able to form an effective barrier against fire, a door must close to completion from its open position, and as part of this process, it will call upon its hinges, locks, latches and door closing devices. Door closers, whether concealed or surface-mounted, use spring-loaded hydraulics to effectively close and engage the door into its latch, where it is held firmly in place by the frame, whereas regular doors rely on manual control.

For buildings with high footfall, an electromagnetic hold-open device may be present on a doorset. These systems are permitted to keep certain fire doors open until a fire alarm is activated, aiding ease of movement until the first sign of a fire incident, in which the system will automatically release and close the doors to completion. Equally, panic and emergency exit devices can be found on some fire doors that are positioned throughout a building's escape routes.

### Testing and standards

To certify fire performance, the complete fire doorset is put through periods of standardised destructive testing in accredited laboratories and workshops. The standard fire performance test method complies to EN 1634-1, and in conjunction with product standard EN 16034, it provides the supply chain with manufacturing guidelines, and as a result, gives responsible persons and end users peace of mind that their doorset will function in a fire scenario.

Fire doors are a legal requirement in all non-domestic properties and houses of multiple occupancy and with updated fire safety regulations now in effect, third-party testing and product traceability is as crucial as ever. Upon testing, certified fire doors are given a fire-resistance rating which details the length of time the door and its

hardware components can withstand fire and smoke, with the most common FD ratings being FD30 and FD60, which declare the doorset can withstand fire for 30 or 60 minutes respectively, and FD30S and FD60S if the doors have been tested with smoke control. A regular door with no fire-resistance characteristics would not be able to withstand these tests and as such, would fail in a real-life event.

What's more, fire resistance tests are conducted on representative samples, and as such, components should not



**RIGHT:** Fire doors must work in tandem with door hardware including handles, locks and closers



**“Fire door hardware in addition to rigorous fire safety testing must go through stages of performance testing”**

**KIRK SMITH**

be substituted post-specification and installation. Fire door hardware for example, in addition to rigorous fire safety testing, must go through stages of performance testing to ensure it functions properly and is able to sustain a level of durability that makes them fit for purpose. Mechanical controlled door closers must be tested to the appropriate standard EN 1154, which classifies hardware over its category of use, number of test cycles, power size, fire behaviour, safety and corrosion resistance. Equally, emergency exit devices and panic exit devices are tested to EN 179 and EN 1125 respectively and electromagnetic hold-open devices to EN 1155. A fire door's single axis hinges must also be must also be tested to EN 1935. ♦

**Kirk Smith is national sales manager at Allegion.**



# Following a thread

Following recent publication of guidance on the Golden Thread **AIJ** explores why the architectural ironmongery industry needs to know about this way of working



**RIGHT:** The golden thread ensures the accurate record of data that everyone can access



### The term 'golden thread' came into existence

in 2018 in the Building a Safer Future report, commissioned by Dame Judith Hackitt. Noting that existing building and fire safety regulations and processes for constructing high-rise buildings were "not fit for purpose" the report called for a move towards digitisation of product information and effective, accurate storage and management of information concerning buildings' designs, construction, and uses. This was dubbed 'the golden thread'.

Specifically it refers to a robust and traceable flow of information that connects everyone involved in a building's lifecycle – from design, construction, and installation to occupation, maintenance, and eventual demolition. It ensures that accurate information about materials, processes, and decisions is not only recorded but also accessible to everyone who needs it.

### Why is it important? For a few reasons:

#### ● Building trust and confidence

Safety is a cornerstone of the construction industry. The golden thread helps ensure that buildings are constructed and maintained with the highest levels of safety in mind. By having a clear record of materials used, methods employed, and decisions made, stakeholders – including clients, contractors, suppliers, and end-users – can have confidence that every step has been documented and can be verified.

#### ● Ensuring compliance and regulation

The golden thread ensures that regulations are followed, from product specification to installation, and provides a foundation for verifying compliance long after construction is complete. This transparency can help organisations avoid costly fines, legal disputes, and brand damage.

#### ● Improving efficiency and reducing waste

## "Research has shown a widespread lack of understanding within the manufacturing industry of the nature of keeping a digital record"

Inaccurate or incomplete information leads to costly mistakes, unnecessary waste, and delayed projects. The golden thread promotes efficiency by providing all parties with the right information at the right time, reducing the chances of rework and miscommunication.

#### ● Driving innovation in product development

With detailed information about how materials are used in the field, manufacturers can gain insights that drive innovation in product development. Feedback from installation and maintenance teams can identify potential areas for improvement, enabling companies to refine their offerings, design safer and more durable products, and ultimately contribute to a safer built environment.

#### ● Enhancing accountability across the supply chain

One of the golden thread's most valuable

contributions is the level of accountability it brings across the construction ecosystem. From the architect who specifies materials to the installer who fits them and the building manager who oversees the completed project, each person is accountable for the decisions they make.

### The problem is

Six years on from the Building Safety Report however and problems remain. Recent research by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) has shown a widespread lack of understanding within the manufacturing industry over the nature of keeping a digital record and how it could be achieved.

In fact, 92% of product manufacturers do not see digitisation as a major concern and more than half "see no need to digitise". 85% of companies still provide product information largely via pdf or hard copy only and only 8% have ever made or commissioned a Building Information Modelling (BIM) object. Just over half of respondents felt they were digitised to some extent, but even when provided with the definition of digitisation, few of the respondents fully grasped and understood what it meant in practice.

Even among those who consider themselves partially digitised, there is often a fundamental misunderstanding of what true digitisation is. Many equated digitisation ▶



“We are now able to do more than we ever could in a faster, more interactive, robust and secure way”

**PHILIP DUCKWORTH**

with using computers or having online systems, rather than understanding it as a comprehensive approach to maintaining and integrating critical safety information throughout a building's lifecycle.

Nicola John, managing director of Fire Door Maintenance, part of UAP Ltd, says businesses must treat the golden thread as more than just a record-keeping tool. “It is a framework for linking different parties within the construction industry,” she says. “By connecting architects, engineers, contractors, manufacturers, and building owners, the golden thread fosters transparency and collaboration.”

Embracing the golden thread requires a shift toward adopting digital technologies and robust data management systems. Here are some key steps:

● **Adopt digital documentation systems**

Ensure that data related to products is available in digital formats that can be easily accessed and shared. Cloud-based

platforms and digital twins are examples of tools that can make data available throughout the building's lifecycle.

● **Invest in data training.** Employees must be trained to understand and manage data responsibly. Properly recorded and maintained data forms the foundation of the golden thread, and training ensures everyone understands its value.

● **Engage with supply chain partners**

Collaboration with supply chain partners ensures that product data remains consistent and traceable from manufacturing to installation.

● **Standardise product information**

Clear, standardised product information supports compliance and ensures all parties have a common understanding of the materials in use.

**Head in the game**

Some members of the architectural ironmongery industry are already on board with digital technology that enables the golden thread. ASSA ABLOY for example, has asset tagging functionality of its Openings Studio BIM software solution.

Openings Studio is a cloud based, custom configuration tool for the creation, visualisation, modification, and management of door openings. It is uniquely integrated with the building model as part of a live and dynamic environment. Every door logged in Openings Studio is automatically assigned a

unique asset tag, which can be affixed to the door as either a QR code or RFID Tag, enabling direct access to the door details, including installation, inspection, and service history.

The asset tag functionality enables direct access from the mobile app to data such as product specification, hardware schedule, product information, inspection reports, digital images, and change management tracking.

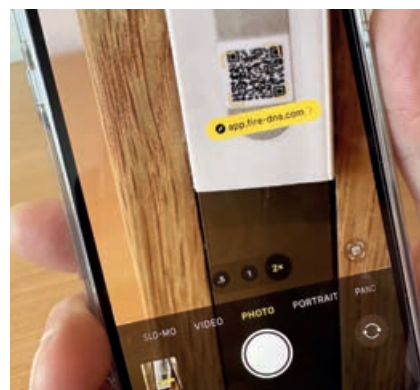
Brian Sofley, managing director at ASSA ABLOY Opening Solutions UK & Ireland Door Group explains: “Our RFID asset tagging system is uniquely creating that ‘golden thread’ of information, enabling direct access to door details, including installation, inspection, and service history. Ultimately, this provides a holistic approach and ensures accountability across the board.”

Openings Studio™ Building Information Modelling (BIM) Software provides access to complete doorset information at all stages from product concept to product care. The Openings Studio Mobile App allows users to manage buildings as a holistic system, and design, build and maintain openings for their entire lifecycle.

Information stored within the app enables buildings to be safely and effectively designed, constructed and operated, providing a seamless link between design intent during the specification process onto the product in service.

Philip Duckworth, chairman of FireDNA says digital asset tracking and monitoring using QR Codes and RFID Tags has been around for many years but says that recent advances in cloud computing and mobile device technology means “we are now able to do more than we ever could, in a faster, more interactive, robust and secure way”.

FireDNA is a cloud-based software and a mobile App specifically designed for passive fire products. Developed alongside product manufacturers, installation contractors, fire ▶



**PHOTOS:** Asset tagging from ASSA ABLOY (above left) and FireDNA (left)



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ABOVE: FireDNA enables the sharing of critical fire safety information

## “The Golden Thread helps ensure safety remains at the forefront of every stage of a building's life”

**NICOLA JOHN**

door and passive fire product inspectors, building owners and their maintenance teams, FireDNA links everyone in the 'chain of responsibility' across the full lifecycle of a product from cradle to grave, delivering a 'golden thread' of fire safety information.

“Our system catalogues manufacturers' product data, including ironmongery specifications and digitally shares it with contractors and installers, who in turn add their installation data, that can then be passed on to building owners, FM's and TMO's,” Duckworth explains.

“FireDNA is a digital conduit that enables the upload, collation and access of critical fire safety information; certification, technical data sheets and remediation and maintenance guides 'at the point of need'.

It provides time and date stamped evidence of not only the products manufactured and specified, but also details

installation and maintenance activities and competencies, which ultimately delivers complete digital compliance in-line with the 'golden thread' principles,” says Duckworth.

Access to the FireDNA Software and Mobile App can be shared with building control, fire safety officers and insurers. FireDNA has also developed a free app for tenants and residents, enabling them to see if their buildings passive fire products are safe, when they were last inspected, by whom, and when the next inspection is due. They can also see their own maintenance responsibilities relating to their fire rated flat entrance door.

### Challenges persist

Despite some key players on board with golden thread Nicola John says there is still a way to go. “It's clear the industry is still not meeting post-Grenfell regulatory requirements to digitise product information, and widespread training to understand the golden thread is needed before we can put it into practice,” she says. “Manufacturers, installers, inspectors, and landlords often work in isolation, focusing solely on their tasks without considering the broader impact on other stages of the building lifecycle.

“This disconnection causes a lack of communication and oversight, with no 'golden thread' to link all product information throughout construction. Without accessible product data, critical safety issues can remain hidden. The consequences of siloed

practices have been fatal. The Grenfell disaster was a stark reminder of this danger.”

And while technological advances now make it easier to maintain the golden thread of information John says digitisation alone isn't enough. She argues that education on understanding the entire lifecycle of safety products is essential.

Fire Door Maintenance, part of UAP, is training the industry to bridge this knowledge gap. “It's the UK's first practical fire door training centre, covering everything from regulation compliance to how and why components were chosen in product engineering and how products are ultimately installed for the end user,” she says.

Those who embrace the golden thread will find themselves better prepared for future compliance requirements and industry shifts; a strategic move that can set them apart in an increasingly competitive market. But more crucially is not losing sight of why the golden thread needed to happen. As John puts it: “By maintaining a comprehensive and integrated digital record, the golden thread helps ensure that safety remains at the forefront of every stage of a building's life, protecting both the structure and its occupants.” ♦

**An online quiz based on this feature is available on the GAI Learning Hub. Completion of this quiz is worth one CPD point towards Registered Professional status. [learninghub.gai.org.uk/totara/dashboard/index.php](https://learninghub.gai.org.uk/totara/dashboard/index.php)**

## EXPERT GUIDANCE

As part of the Construction Leadership Council's response to the Morrell-Day Report, an industry working group was formed to look specifically at implications of digital technology in construction products. The Golden Thread was heavily featured within this report. This was chaired by GAI technical manager Douglas Masterson and

included GAI members Brian Sofley from ASSA ABLOY, Tony Millen from FireDNA, Peter Barker from Warringtonfire, and Dave Timson from Eurobond Doors.

View the guidance at <https://tinyurl.com/yd5eb3wx> and a summary of the guidance at <https://tinyurl.com/5e3dckkh>

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# Strategic thinking

Rachael Bliss took up the reins as chief executive of the GAI in August. She shares her vision for the Guild with **Nicky Roger**



**Q: You arrived from a very different sector. What have been your first impressions of the architectural ironmongery industry?**

I have never joined an industry as welcoming and friendly as this one; the level of support I've received has been mind-blowing. The two things that stuck out to me when I've been visiting members are the pride and passion; everyone has given up their time to meet me and has been happy to explain how their business works and how the industry works. It's been really helpful to me to develop my basic knowledge of the industry and how the key players work so quickly and I'm extremely grateful to them for that.

**Q: What is your vision for the GAI?**

My mission is centred on advancing the industry through innovation, professional competency and sustainability whilst enhancing the value and reputation of the Guild and its members. There are some really key things in that. Without our members we simply don't exist so we need to have a member centric strategy and I think we are missing that at the moment.

I want to future proof the Guild and ensure we remain relevant and keep pace with innovation changes. If we look to 2060, where will the industry be then? If you look at what evolution might look like in terms of digital and artificial intelligence it is going to be a rapidly changing landscape.

Trade associations have a key part to play in supporting professionals in an industry that

## “Trade associations have a key part to play in supporting professionals in an industry that is going to pick up pace and evolve quickly”

**RACHAEL BLISS, GAI CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

is going to pick up pace and evolve quickly. With digital innovation for example we need to support our members through those changes to ensure our industry is fit for the future. It's about standards, credibility and competency of course, but it's also facilitating conversations around innovation; asking what are the skills we need; and ensuring our members have those ready for the changes.

In access control for example, we now have facial recognition and there is research out there that suggests that by 2060 ironmongery might have voice-automated access or thought-responsive hardware. We already have 'smart' buildings and this will develop so that when people walk into them it recognises that individual, knows their accessibility needs, what access control approvals they have. The building almost thinks for itself and makes changes relevant to who is in the building. That seems futuristic but 2060 isn't that far away.

### BEHIND THE SCENES

● **Most impressive building:**

Marina Bay Sands in Singapore

● **Favourite piece of door hardware:**

The handle. It's aesthetic and tactile as well as having purpose.

● **Favourite way to relax:** Getting outdoors walking my miniature sausage dog, Dougie.

We know that some of our members are already looking ahead to these challenges, but we also know that many more in our industry are not. What our recent member survey shows is that GAI members want the Guild to take the lead in this – to facilitate the strategic, innovative conversations that will help them be ready for the future, and to develop the products, services and tools they will need. We will be analysing the survey results along with the many conversations I've had over recent months, to create a change process that allows members to be fully involved in the evolution of their Guild. To succeed in such a fast-changing environment we have got to build an intimate understanding of where the industry is going and the needs of every professional in that industry.

**Q: Sustainability is a key area for you isn't it?**

Yes and I'm pleased to see we have a sustainability committee and producing guides, but there is a much bigger story there: understanding how sustainable our industry is at the moment. I would like to see that in our strategy; it's important we practise what we preach.

It's great to see some of our members have sustainable products and are starting to implement circular economy thinking. But when we start talking about smart access and digital solutions we don't necessarily understand the environmental impact of those things.

A big part of our role is to provide that community and platform to have those conversations. A key part of our role is advocacy and industry representation so the only way to do that meaningfully is to regularly engage with members and be at the cutting edge of what is going on.

I'm really pleased that I've already had the approval to start strategy work and to bring in resources to help me deliver that. The GAI must address the big issues in the industry and we still have plenty to do to fully identify those. Then we need to make sure everyone is actively engaged and talking about those issues; then we need to get quickly on to doing something about them.

I want to start actively having those difficult conversations and coming up with solutions and ideas about how we address them. I'd like us to have a collective voice. And then when we've got that we can deliver against it. We will know what the products and services we should be delivering, we will know our members' needs, so then we can start measuring our performance to know if we are delivering against that strategy. Then you can layer up and look at the influence we need to have. We are part of the wider construction products industry and the built environment industry above that, so how do we – as this small but very important part of the industry – have a big voice, and how do I make the Guild that trusted recognised voice. That's key to our future success. Change is definitely afoot and I'm really excited about it. ♦

# New rules

A new Code of Practice for fire and escape door hardware has been updated for first time in 10 years. **AIJ** reports on what's changed

**A comprehensively revised Code of Practice** for the selection of building hardware for fire-resisting and escape door assemblies and doorsets has been published by the GAI and the Door & Hardware Federation (DHF).

This new edition, issue No. 5, is the first revision in more than a decade, and represents a significant update and consolidation of previous guidelines to reflect the very latest legislative requirements and best practices in the industry. It provides an essential reference and resource for a broad spectrum of construction industry professionals including architects, building control officers, fire officers, responsible persons, duty holders, manufacturers, specifiers, and suppliers of building hardware and fire doors.

The Code addresses a wide range of legislative requirements, including:

- Construction products regulations in the EU and UK.
- Building regulations throughout the UK and Ireland, including the Building Regulations 2010 (England & Wales), Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004, Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012, and Building Regulations 1997-2021 (Ireland).
- Workplace fire safety legislation across the UK and Ireland, such as the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Equality legislation in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland.

Additionally, the Code considers third-party certification schemes and declarations



**“There are a number of new sections relating to electric locking and access control ”**

**DOUGLAS MASTERSON**

of conformity with relevant standards, ensuring that the guidance provided is both comprehensive and up to date.

The Code applies to building hardware used on timber fire doors with up to two hours of fire resistance and steel fire doors with up to four hours of fire resistance. The hardware items covered are categorised into essential items necessary for the successful operation of the doors and optional (non-essential) items that could potentially cause door failure if not properly selected or installed.

As a part of this revision there are also a number of new sections relating to electric locking and access control, which are of increasing importance in the world of building hardware.

Issue 5 of the Code replaces the previous issue 4, as well as all previous codes of practice published by both the Association of Building Hardware Manufacturers and the GAI, all of which have been withdrawn to ensure that professionals are working with the most current and relevant information. ◆

**Download the Code at [firecode.org.uk](http://firecode.org.uk)**







# SERIOUS ABOUT ARCHITECTURAL IRONMONGERY? PROVE IT

Globally recognised as the mark of expertise in architectural hardware, GAI qualifications are the best way to prove your knowledge and professional competence to customers and employers alike. Study with the GAI to learn and progress through the following qualifications:

- Foundation in Hardware
- Certificate in Architectural Hardware
- GAI Diploma in Scheduling
- GAI Diploma in Door Systems
- GAI Diploma in Electric Hardware & Access Control
- Certificate in Standards & Regulations
- Registered Architectural Ironmonger (RegAI)
- Registered in Door Systems (RegDS)
- Registered in Electric Hardware & Access Control (RegAC)
- Certificated Standards and Regulations Advisor (CertSRA)

From our introductory Foundation in Hardware and skill-building Certificate in Architectural Hardware courses, students have a choice of three specialist diplomas – each leading, through participation in our CPD programme, to the industry benchmark for professional competence, GAI Registered Professional status (RegAI, RegDS and RegAC).

Specialist expertise in industry standards and regulations can also be developed via the a dedicated certificate course that paves the way to the Certificated Standards and Regulations Advisor (CertSRA) status.

#### Find out more

Enrolment is open until 31 December for 2024/25 courses. Study is already underway, so don't delay - download your copy of the GAI Education Prospectus and enrol today at [www.gai.org.uk/learning](http://www.gai.org.uk/learning)

# Dear GAI...

I have been made aware of the new European Construction Product Regulation. What are the key differences between the new version and the existing one and how might this impact the UK market going forward?

**Douglas Masterson** answers the question



## The Construction Products Regulation

2011 (CPR) harmonises performance information on construction products across the EU. It is made most visible by the mandatory CE marking of products and many of the products which are manufactured, specified and supplied in the ironmongery market fall within these standards.

The European Council adopted the revised Construction Products Regulation (CPR) in November 2024. This new version differs greatly from its predecessor. It continues to harmonise the EU rules for marketing of construction products and facilitates their free movement in the European single market. However, it also promotes the circular economy and technological development, enhances sustainability and digitalisation in the construction sector and actively promotes the reuse of materials.

### What you need to know:

Digital product passports (DPPs) will be introduced which will need to be available through the construction digital product passport system. This DPP will provide comprehensive and accessible information about products through their lifecycle in a digital format.

- The new regulation will combine the Declaration of Performance with the Declaration of Conformity into a singular Declaration of Performance and Conformity, simplifying the documentation processes for manufacturers.
- The content of the Declaration of Performance and Conformity, is to include the product's environmental sustainability performance over its life cycle.
- The Declaration of Performance and Conformity is to be supplied by electronic means unless the declaration is included in a digital product passport
- The new regulation will also cover used products, key parts of products and parts or materials intended to be used for products.
- While the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) encompasses European

**"The European Council adopted the revised CPR in November 2024. This new version differs greatly from its predecessor"**

**DOUGLAS MASTERSON**

- Assessment Documents (EADs), the harmonised zone does not cover them. However, CE marking can still be obtained with EADs if they are cited in the Official Journal of the EU.
- Where the Commission considers a harmonised standard to be unsatisfactory, it may adopt an implementing act making it mandatory but with restrictions.
- A number of new rules and conditions for affixing CE marking will apply including:
  - In the case of used products, the last two digits of the year when the product was de-installed followed by the last two digits of the year in which the CE marking was affixed on the used product.
  - Some information can be replaced by a data carrier or permalink connected to the declaration of performance and conformity when it is available on a website
- The CE marking may be subsequently followed by a pictogram or other mark indicating a special risk or use.
- There will be a number of new obligations for manufacturers, which include:
  - The manufacturer shall ensure that the product's performance is assessed in relation to its essential characteristics laid down in harmonised European Standards (hENs) or European Assessment Documents (hENs) or European Assessment Documents plus any additional requirements set under

delegated and implementing acts.

- Manufacturers, where deemed appropriate, are to carry out sample testing of products to ensure the accuracy, reliability and stability of the declared performance and of the conformity of the product, investigate and if necessary keep a register of complaints of non-conforming products and product recalls and shall keep importers and distributors so informed.
- Manufacturers using 3D-printing need to satisfy obligations incumbent on manufacturers when placing product on the market.
- Where applicable, manufacturers must ensure availability of spare parts not commonly available in the market.
- If a manufacturer considers or has reason to believe that a product they placed on the market is not in conformity with its declared performance or in compliance with the

Regulation, they shall immediately take corrective measures to bring the product into conformity or withdraw or recall it.

#### **UK Market impact**

The existing UK Construction Product Regulation entitled "Construction Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020" is based upon the existing European CPR. Should the UK CPR continue to be used, or be replaced with a revised version then this would mean a divergence from the EU as both jurisdictions would have differing regulations.

To complicate matters further the original Northern Ireland Protocol (and now the Windsor Framework) gives Northern Ireland access to the EU single market through continuous alignment with relevant EU regulation (primarily on goods). There is therefore a potential for 'internal divergence'

### Entry into force of the new EU-CPR

#### **November 2024**

- New EU-CPR articles and paragraphs relevant for the development of standardisation requests and EADs apply

#### **12 months after entry into force**

- Remaining new EU-CPR articles apply

#### **24 months after entry into force**

- Parts of the current EU-CPR are repealed

#### **15 years after entry into force**

- New EU-CPR Article 92 on penalties applies
- The whole of the current CPR is repealed

with the rest of the UK if the new European CPR is adopted in NI.

There also remains the issue of UKCA and CE marking in Great Britain. On 2 September 2024 the previously stated deadline of 30 June 2025 for CE marking recognition in Great Britain was revoked and once a new date has been published, a further two year co-existence period will also apply. This means that UKCA marking will not be mandatory until after CE marking has been removed in GB, therefore CE marking continues to be the only mandatory conformity marking for the entire UK market. ♦

**Further information on this topic is available to GAI members in the joint GAI CPA Technical Briefings on the European CPR and Digital Product Passports on [www.gai.org.uk/knowledge](http://www.gai.org.uk/knowledge).**

**An online quiz based on this feature is available on the GAI Learning Hub. Completion of this quiz is worth one CPD point towards Registered Professional status. [learninghub.gai.org.uk/totara/dashboard/index.php](http://learninghub.gai.org.uk/totara/dashboard/index.php)**



## GAI TALK

## Rachael Bliss

GAI chief executive



The run through to the end of the calendar year is always an exceptionally busy time at the GAI, and I am amazed to reflect how my first four months in post have already flown by! It's been great getting out and seeing so many of our members and meeting some of our partners. The highlight for me was, of course, the Education Awards. It was a wonderful afternoon of celebration and recognition of our industry's newest qualified professionals.

Professional competency will always be close to my heart. Having completed my own journey through a Level 7 degree apprenticeship to become a Chartered Manager, I know firsthand how difficult it is to study, work and live all at the same time. It takes real commitment and determination (and at times some personal sacrifices and a few late nights playing catch up). As well as confirming technical ability and know-how, achieving professional competence provides both a sense of empowerment and a validation of experience. Congratulations again to all those whose successes we celebrated at the Awards event.

With the new year approaching, it's often a time for reflection, planning and aspirations. And we are definitely in change and aspiration mode at the Guild right now. As I have said elsewhere in this edition of AIJ, my focus at the moment is on the future – what it holds for our industry and how we can evolve the Guild to ensure it remains relevant and at the forefront of our industry, delivering the products, services and support that our members need and want. This is a really exciting time of opportunity, and I look forward to using this column in future issues to share our progress and engage with members on our continuing progress towards a modern, strong and visionary trade association.

# GAI Community...

## GAI celebrates rising stars at 44th Education Awards

The GAI held its 44th GAI Education Awards at the end of November celebrating the outstanding educational achievements of students in the 2023-24 education year.

This year's event, sponsored by Robust UK, was held at the Grand Connaught Rooms in London on 28 November. The ceremony honoured prize and award winners and those collecting the GAI's Stage 3 qualifications: Diploma in Scheduling (DipGAI); Diploma in Door Systems (DipDS); Diploma in Electric Hardware & Access Control (DipAC); and Certificate in Standards & Regulations (CertSRA).

Joining more than 300 guests from across the architectural ironmongery and

door industry was guest speaker Charlie Luxton, the TV presenter and architectural designer.

Welcoming people to the event, GAI chief executive Rachael Bliss said: "Today, we gather to celebrate excellence, dedication, and innovation in our field – qualities that not only define our successful students but also the very ethos of the GAI.

"The 40 individuals we honour this afternoon embody the very best of our industry. They have demonstrated not only technical proficiency but also a commitment to continuous learning, accountability, and innovation in response to the challenges of our time."

**BELOW:** Lisa Douras (Simonswerk UK) is presented with the Gold Medal for the top student in the GAI Diploma in Scheduling by (l-r) GAI President Kaz Spiewakowski, guest speaker Charlie Luxton and John Ward of prize sponsor Allegion.





ABOVE: The 40 winners celebrate at this year's GAI Education Awards

GAI President Kaz Spiewakowski used his keynote speech to put education at the heart of the industry's future, urging all GAI members to keep asking themselves: "What more can I do to build competence in this sector?"

He added: "Education is a core pillar of the Guild's work – arguably nothing matters more. Through their effort and commitment, the learners whose success we celebrate today have shown how much it matters to them. It also matters to the employers, whose future success rests on the skills of their employees. But even more than that, education matters to the future of our industry."

"Professional competence and excellence across a whole industry only happens because enough individuals – people like you – make this kind of commitment. Today we are celebrating the achievements of those who have already taken these steps. I look forward in future years to celebrating the achievements of all those you have inspired, encouraged and supported in turn."

**"The learners have shown how much it matters to them. But even more than that, education matters to the future of our industry"**

**KAZ SPIEWAKOWSKI**

The GAI programme is the only one in the world leading to qualifications and registered professional status in architectural ironmongery to British and European standards. The GAI programme provides the architectural ironmongery industry with all the tools required to specify and schedule architectural ironmongery, door systems and access control for any project with complete confidence.

**View the list of winners at [gai.org.uk/educationawards](https://gai.org.uk/educationawards)**

## GAI appointed to new ISO position

The GAI has further increased the scope of its technical advocacy and engagement work with a new ISO committee appointment.

The appointment sees GAI technical manager Douglas Masterson sitting as a UK expert on ISO Technical Committee TC 162 which covers doors, windows and curtain walling (encompassing building hardware).

This appointment marks the GAI's first representation at ISO level, the level above CEN (which writes European standards). It builds on GAI's participation in an ISO working group which is currently writing a new standard for building hardware terminology (which will be published by BSI as a British Standard in the New Year)

Douglas said: "This is an important extension of our representation and influence. ISO standards are of huge global significance, encompassing not just products but aspects of business and commercial activity as diverse as quality management, environmental management, and health and safety."

"Not only will this new appointment provide us with insight and involvement with the development of further standards in the door and hardware world, but it will also allow us to represent our members more generally at this global scale."



## Meet a Member: Richard Finch, sales office manager, Croft Architectural Hardware



### What made you choose a career in architectural ironmongery?

At 17, I started working for a manufacturing company as an office junior and worked my way up into an account manager role. Croft was looking for a sales office manager, and I wanted to stay in the manufacturing industry but develop my skill set further by working for a high-end, well-known brand.

### What do you most like about the industry?

This industry comes with a lot of variety, whether it's the jobs we are working on, or new products we are developing. Our projects cover all manner of properties from private yachts to large international hotels, all of which come with their own set of challenges and obstacles to overcome. There's a real sense of achievement in completing our part in them and hearing the positive feedback from our customers.

### How has GAI membership supported your career and professional life?

In my early days at Croft, I completed the GAI certificate in Architectural Hardware. Coming from an industry outside of

architectural hardware, this gave me the foundations I needed to offer our customers a competent service from the start.

### What projects and business successes are you most proud of, and why?

I really enjoyed being involved in a project we did with 3V Architectural Hardware, on Mortimer Street in London's West End. We supplied bespoke products for this project and the results were spectacular.

Another proud achievement, outside of projects and specifications, was a recent award win for our outstanding customer service: the Best Business Award's Customer Focus award.

**"I enjoyed a project we did with 3V Architectural Hardware in London's West End"**

**RICHARD FINCH**

### What do you do in your spare time?

I have a young family that keeps me very busy! I am season ticket holder at Wolverhampton Wanderers so when I do have time for myself I watch as much football as I can. I also enjoy playing football, though my joints would disagree these days!

## New hospitality sector user guide

The GAI has published a new end-user guide specifically designed to help property owners, managers, and occupiers in the hospitality sector to maintain the safe, effective, and efficient performance of their building hardware.

The end-user guide provides detailed maintenance recommendations and care instructions for various finishes, along with checklists for safety-critical products such as fire doors, escape doors, and automatic doors.

This new guide is tailored to meet the needs of those involved in the operation and maintenance of hospitality buildings post-handover. GAI technical manager Douglas Masterson said: "This guide offers sector-specific information on products including hotel locking systems, access control and hotel safes as well as tips on keeping properties secure, the lifetime



costs of maintaining ironmongery, as well as useful checklists for fire doors and powered pedestrian door operators."

The GAI encourages hotel owners, property developers, facilities managers, maintenance companies, occupiers, and anyone involved in the care of buildings post-construction to utilise these end-user resources. Specifiers, installers, and those in the hardware supply chain are also urged to incorporate these guides into their customer service processes. The Guide is free to download at [www.gai.org.uk/users](http://www.gai.org.uk/users).



## GAI introduces new Foundation in Doors training course

The GAI has launched a new introductory Foundation in Doors qualification. The new course teaches the basics of doors, door frames and door testing, and the properties that must be considered when supplying a doorset or door assembly. The importance of third-party certification is also addressed.

It has been designed as an induction or introductory course for new employees as well as back-of-house, trade counter and customer support staff at door manufacturing, door system and hardware companies. It will also provide relevant skills and understanding for those working alongside the sector, such as architectural ironmongers or builders' merchants.

GAI training and development manager Rachel Tipton said: "This course provides an important new introduction to the GAI education programme for those working in door manufacturing, systems and hardware. While it stands alone as an induction or introductory course, it will also serve as the first step on a path leading to the Diploma

**"This course is an important programme for those working in door manufacturing, systems and hardware"**

**RACHEL TIPTON**

in Door Systems and ultimately to GAI Registered Professional status as a RegDS." The Foundation learning package provides online learning across seven modules. Learners progress at their own pace, completing self-assessment tests and an online examination. With a full six months to complete the course, successful learners then receive a printed certificate and access to higher-level GAI qualifications. **Visit [gai.org.uk/foundationdoors](https://gai.org.uk/foundationdoors) for more information.**

## Third-party accreditation affirms quality of GAI training

The GAI has been awarded third-party accreditation for its globally-recognised programme of training courses and qualifications. The accreditation is by GQA Qualifications, a leading awarding body for specialist sectors and roles within the construction industry.

It covers GAI courses and qualifications including: the Foundation in Hardware; Certificate in Architectural Hardware (CIAH); Certificate in Standards and Regulations (CertSRA); and the three Diplomas in Scheduling (DipGAI); Door Systems (DipDS); and Electric Hardware and Access Control (DipAC).

GAI chief executive Rachael Bliss said: "External accreditation is not just a validation of the quality of the courses and qualifications, but also evidence of our commitment to continual improvement."

In recent years, the programme has been broadened to reflect changing requirements in the sector. This included the launch in 2022 of three new Stage 3 qualifications: the Certificate in Standards and Regulation (CertSRA) and (to stand alongside the existing Diploma in Scheduling (DipGAI)) the new Diploma in Door Systems (DipDS) and Diploma in Electric Hardware and Access Control (DipAC).

GAI training and development manager Rachel Tipton said: "Accredited training means that GAI learners and their employers can be confident that they are fully and properly trained in the specifics of their role and are therefore more able to perform their duties to the highest standards."

GQA Qualifications is one of the most respected awarding organisations in the UK. It provides independent external monitoring to ensure that qualifications are delivered consistently to the highest standards.

**Read more about GAI education, courses and qualifications at [gai.org.uk/LEARNING](https://gai.org.uk/LEARNING)**



## GAI team members reflect on decade of development

The GAI has always evolved in response to challenges in the industry, and the past decade has been no exception. Through this particular 10 years, two members of staff have driven forward key pillars of Guild activity – training and development manager Rachel Tipton and technical manager Douglas Masterson. Both are now celebrating their 10th anniversaries with the GAI.

Douglas has been the GAI's first full time technical manager, an innovation he believes has been instrumental in allowing the Guild to increase both the technical support it provides for members and also the influence it wields in the wider construction sector.

As evidence of the technical resources now available to GAI member companies, he points to an online Knowledge Base containing more than 120 documents and templates, as well as a technical helpline dealing with more than 300 queries every year. In its advocacy work, the GAI is now represented on 10 international committees, closely involved with BS standards, and Douglas is also involved with many key industry groups.

"I am so proud to be technical manager of the GAI," says Douglas. "Working alongside the technical committee and many other volunteers and contributors, it's always been a hugely fulfilling role."

The education programme which Rachel inherited when she joined the GAI was already known around the world. But this too has seen remarkable growth over the past 10 years.

**"Douglas, myself and the entire GAI team are committed to raising that bar higher and higher"**

**RACHEL TIPTON**

As highlights, Rachel points to the launch of a new digital learning platform, the GAI Learning Hub. There have also been new qualifications introduced at every level; the landmark third-party accreditation of GAI courses and qualifications; plus the Education Awards which are a high point in every year.

"The GAI's education programme is the result of decades of commitment, expertise and contribution by countless volunteers, committee members and employees. It has been such an honour to pick up that mantle and carry it forward."

And what about the next 10 years? One priority will inevitably be an area where the two already work closely together, the Guild's CPD programme. "The GAI is already at the vanguard of the competency agenda," says Rachel. "Douglas, myself, and the entire GAI team are absolutely committed to keep raising that bar higher and higher."

## Grenfell Report review update



**The GAI has begun the task of reviewing in detail the recommendations and implications of the Grenfell Inquiry Report Phase 2. A sub-committee of the GAI Technical Committee is meticulously**

**reviewing the report's 58 recommendations, which range across areas including regulation, testing, competence and responsibilities.**

**As well as assessing their implications for the architectural ironmongery and associated industry, the sub-committee will be identifying the ways in which these recommendations will inform the Guild's ongoing commitment to raising safety, skills and competence in this sector. It is anticipated that initial findings will be reported in early 2025.**



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ARTI SANDHU



# Knock or run?

The ancient knocker in Durham Cathedral offered more than a way in

**There are ancient knockers and then there is** The Sanctuary Ring in Durham Cathedral. Placed on the North Door of the Cathedral shortly after it was completed, it offered temporary refuge to those fleeing justice.

The right of claiming 'sanctuary' or protection in a religious building dates back to ancient times. As Ina, King of the West Saxons, 693 stated: "...(if) anyone accused of a capital offence flies to a Church, his life shall be spared, and he shall make compensation according to justice."

Fugitives would usually be protected from the law for 40 days, before having to either face trial or go into exile for the rest of their lives, unless they were granted a royal pardon. At Durham, the protection only

lasted 37 days – a time limit apparently set by Saint Cuthbert when he appeared in a vision to a monk. The right of sanctuary was abolished in England in 1624.

## Ring or knocker?

Although it is often called a 'sanctuary knocker', the Durham Sanctuary Ring was not used in this way. There is no evidence of a 'knocking plate' having been attached to the North door, and anyone trying to use the ring this way would have badly bruised their fingers! Instead, a monk was stationed on watch in a small room above the door, and as soon as he saw someone grasp the Ring he would ring a bell to declare that sanctuary had been granted.

"If anyone accused of a capital offence flies to a church his life shall be spared"

**INA, KING OF WEST SAXONS**

The Sanctuary Ring on the door of the Cathedral today is a replica, placed there in 1980. The original, on permanent display in Durham Cathedral Museum, dates from the 1100s, so was made at about the same time as the door. It is made of bronze, and weighs about 30kg.

The design is based on a medieval 'Hellmouth' image, designed to frighten away evil, and shows the head of a lion eating a man. The man's legs hang out of the lion's mouth and a double-headed snake bites his feet, forming the handle. The lion's eyes may have once been made of coloured glass.

The Durham Sanctuary Ring is a unique survival among English door rings of this time, although there are similar examples in Europe, for example at Le Puy Cathedral in France and Payerne in Switzerland. ♦



**ABOVE:** The north door of Durham Cathedral with the replica knocker



# SERIOUS ABOUT ARCHITECTURAL IRONMONGERY?

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The Guild of Architectural Ironmongery (GAI) supports, assures and represents architectural ironmongers, wholesalers, manufacturers and others working in and alongside the sector.

Membership of the GAI demonstrates your company's commitment to highest standards of technical excellence, professional competence and regulatory compliance.

### Join the GAI today for:

- 50% off fees for the GAI's renowned education programme – the only one in the world leading to qualifications in architectural ironmongery to British and European standards.
- Specialist technical resources, advice and support.
- Regular networking opportunities to help you expand your professional network, make new contacts, and help shape the industry.
- Free business support services to save your company £££ on HR, legal, health & safety, and recruitment.
- Attractive discounts, free publications including AIJ magazine, and much more!

To find out more about GAI membership, email [membership@gai.org.uk](mailto:membership@gai.org.uk) or visit [www.gai.org.uk/membership](http://www.gai.org.uk/membership).



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# What would **you** choose?

Codelocks classic CL5000 electronic lock just got a facelift.

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codelocks.com  
sales@codelocks.com  
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