



Architectural
Ironmongery
Journal

SPRING 2026



INSIDE

- BS 8214 changes
- Specification Awards judging
- To doorset or not to doorset



A NEW ERA

The impact of the
Government White Paper on
construction product reform

“

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Jeremy Baltrop, G Johns.



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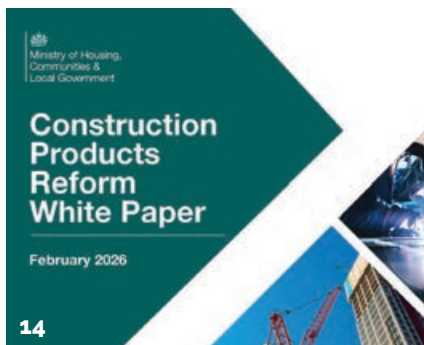
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Digest

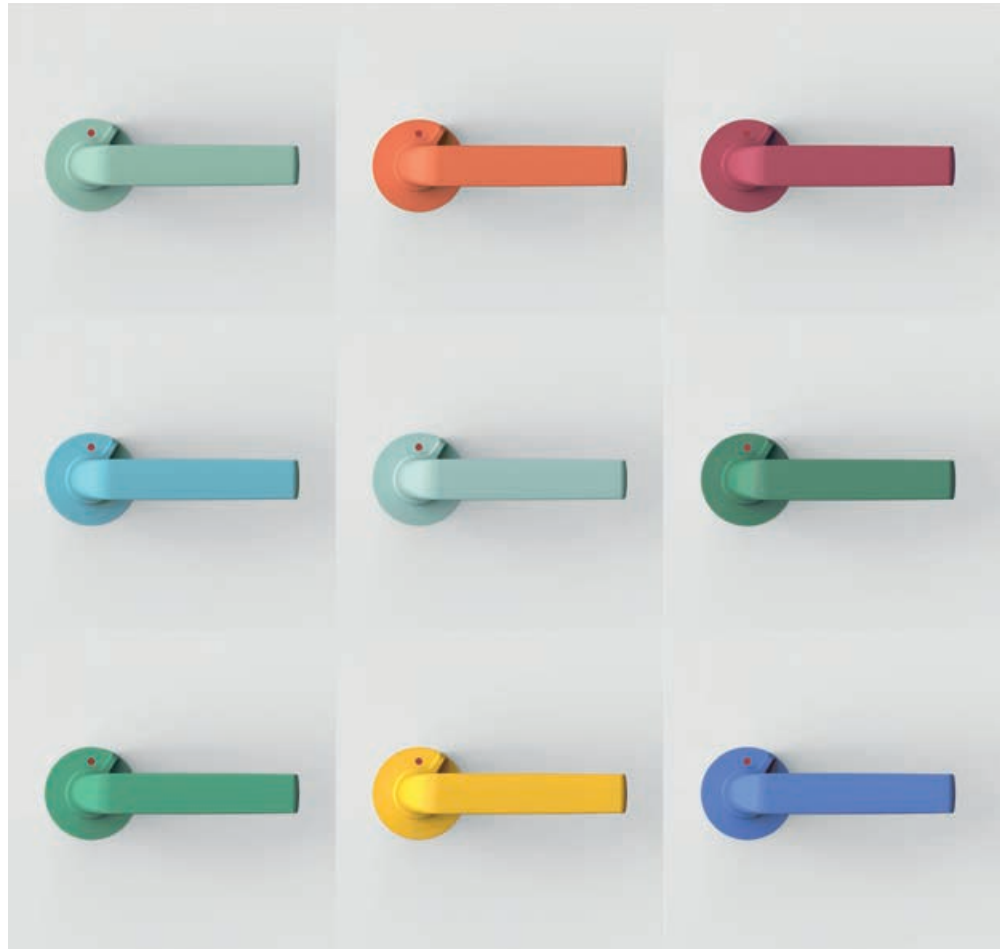
MAIN PICTURE: Some of the available shades of Le Corbusier Les Couleurs®
BELOW: FSB 128g now in stainless steel



FSB has expanded its offer making its FSB 128g available in stainless steel.

Designed by Markus Michalski and Michael Schmidt, and awarded a clutch of design awards, the handle features a slim silhouette, a flat front, and an ergonomic grip.

The handle – and the full product range – becoming available in stainless



FSB extends range with steel and colour

steel means it can be specified for higher-use environments including public buildings, medical facilities, and upscale residential projects.

FSB has also extended its AFL® rose solution offering 63 shades of Le Corbusier's Polychromie Architecturale. Les Couleurs® Le Corbusier® is available exclusively in combination with model FSB 1267.

"Doors can now be designed with a hardware solution that translates architectural thinking into colour," says the firm. "FSB AFL® in Les Couleurs® Le Corbusier® is perfect for sophisticated interior concepts, from office buildings and hospitality spaces to premium residences with a design-forward aesthetic."

www.fsb.de/en



ABOVE: ASSA ABLOY's Close-Motion® door closer



CPA to provide guidance on own branding

The Construction Products Association (CPA) has begun work on guidance on own branding of construction products.

Under construction product regulations in Great Britain, the legal implications of selling hardware under a trade or brand name that was originally made by someone else are significant. If a company places a construction product on the market under its own name or trademark, it is treated as the manufacturer in the eyes of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) which means the brand owner becomes responsible for ensuring the product complies with all regulatory requirements such as CE/UKCA marking, Declaration of Performance, etc..

The CPA is developing the guidance with the Office for Product and Safety Standards – and supported by the GAI – to clarify regulatory obligations, promote transparency and safety and reduce industry risk.

Guidance can also be found in the GAI's 'Ironmongery Manufacturers' Guidance Document' aimed at manufacturers and anyone placing architectural ironmongery on the market (including own-brand products).

This document is designed to help businesses understand and meet their regulatory obligations under CPR. It includes: what product information must be supplied; how to communicate product performance and limitations; and guidance on ironmongery components used in fire resisting door systems.

www.gai.org.uk

Interiors awards open for entries

The Society of British and International Interior Design (SBID)'s Awards are open for entries.

The SBID awards attract entries from across the world in categories that extend across interior design, fit-out and product.

They are judged by industry experts for technical content and aesthetic creativity before being put to a public

vote. There are 17 categories for interior design, 12 for product design and five for fit out.

Past winners include ASSA ABLOY for its Close-Motion® door closer; Hendel & Hendel for its Brokk Collection of cabinet hardware; the FinBolt Triple Doorset; and the Digbeth range by Armac Martin.

Enter at www.sbidawards.com/



Design Festival tours the north

Design Festival North is bringing products, trends and innovations to Birmingham and Liverpool this summer following a successful event in Leeds in March.

Held at the Secret Space in Digbeth on 17 June and at Cain's Brewery Village in Liverpool (pictured) on 8 July, the Interior Design Event is aimed at specifiers, commercial interior designers and architects, offering the chance to get hands-on with new products from well-known brands as well as networking with contacts in architecture and design.

www.designsocialnorth.co.uk

Carbon free and competitive?

As the UK strives towards the net-zero deadline of 2050, sustainable product offerings are no longer a nice to have, but rather a strategic imperative. **Lara Coutinho** discusses.



“Manufacturers who explain how their products impact sustainability – whether through EPDs, certifications or testing – will become the first choice for buyers keen to source sustainable solutions.”

At just past the halfway point to the UK’s net-zero deadline, efforts to reduce the built environment’s sustainability impact are intensifying, with architectural hardware not exempt from increasing scrutiny.

Partners are digging deeper and demanding to see the evidence of ethical practices in those they align with. Ultimately, transparency builds trust and can help create a competitive edge in an increasingly under-the-microscope built environment.

Suppliers and manufacturers who explain how their products impact sustainability and engage proactively in this conversation, whether through EPDs, certifications or testing, will see benefits in the long run. They will become the first choice for buyers who are either keen, or required, to source sustainable product solutions.

With so much call for change within the construction industry, and with the UK Government being warned about the required pace of change, we are likely to see regulations evolve and adapt to support better practices.

Architectural hardware manufacturers choosing to partner with suppliers that offer a sustainability conscious approach built on knowledge, interest and innovation today will be the best positioned to meet regulations as they continue to change.

As part of global manufacturing leader Quanex, Zoo Hardware is helping to shape progress towards the group’s wider 2030 Sustainability Roadmap.

The plan outlines proactive measures aimed at minimising environmental impact, while supporting UK customers with innovative products and sustainability services.

We are committed to doing all we can to be a key component in our customers’ sustainability focused supply chain.

The construction industry and the architectural ironmongery supply chain are witnessing huge change. With this, in order to evolve and thrive, those in the architectural ironmongery space need to embed environmental responsibility across all facets of their businesses, including supply chain choices.

Focusing on creating a sustainable supply chain opens the door to innovation, facilitates alignment with regulations ahead of time, and helps meet growing customer demand for genuine and transparent sustainable solutions. ♦

Lara Coutinho is supply chain sustainability manager for Quanex group, which now includes Zoo Hardware.

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One size fits all?

Three leading architectural ironmongers on when a doorset isn't the answer

Tom Planck, managing director, John Planck

The concept of the 'doorset' is nothing new. I recall my father saying years ago that suppliers in the USA shifted from separate door and hardware packages to doorsets, only to revert back again. Despite the increased demand for doorsets in the UK over the past 20 years, the continued prominence of architectural ironmongers speaks volumes.

The sheer variety of projects and sectors across our industry means both approaches can be successful. Equally, the breadth of product choice and design options available today is vast. The rise in popularity of specialist finishes and bespoke designs is not thanks to doorsets, but to the expertise of architectural ironmongers and manufacturers pushing boundaries. The level of choice now



available allows design teams to add genuine finesse to their buildings.

Design, however, must never compromise conformity. Certification is paramount and relates to the performance of both the door and its essential hardware – hinges, door closers, lock cases and panic hardware – all of which are independently tested for durability, suitability and fire resistance.

It is a myth that ironmongery must be supplied as part of a single-source doorset to meet certification. This remains untrue, even with the transition from BS476 to EN1634 testing by 2029. Reputable door manufacturers can confirm which performance products are compatible with their doors. Claims that only "their hinge" or "their closer" can be used should be challenged – you do have a choice.

This is where a Registered Architectural Ironmonger (RegAI) adds value. RegAIs

maintain up-to-date knowledge of standards and legislation, enabling them to guide design teams through compliance while delivering the aesthetic they want. They are not restricted to a limited in-house range, but can source from a wide spectrum of manufacturers, ensuring correct specification for door weight, frame detail, width and overall design intent.

Ultimately, collaboration between door manufacturers and architectural ironmongers offers the strongest solution. When design teams want control, flexibility and compliance, a RegAI ensures they can truly design their building their way.

Stewart Lauder,
managing director,
Allgood



Ironmongery is one of the most important tactile interfaces between a building and its users. Architects have long understood this, using carefully considered hardware to elevate how people experience a space.

Doorsets, however, remain a nuanced subject - and this is exactly where experienced, qualified architectural ironmongers add real value. Their expertise ensures that each project is not only compliant but genuinely tailored to the design intent and the practical needs of architects and contractors.

When specifying hardware, the complexities and nuances cannot be overstated. Each project comes with its distinct set of challenges, and a one-size-fits-all solution often falls short of meeting the unique demands. Qualified architectural ironmongers, with their in-depth understanding of hardware components, provide a bespoke approach that can be adapted to suit the specific needs of a project.

Architects and designers should therefore feel confident that they are not restricted to off-the-shelf doorsets.

They can continue to design and specify exactly what they want, provided compliance is achieved:

- Today, under BS 476 or EN 1634
- Tomorrow, under EN 1634 through:
 1. Fully tested doorsets (door and hardware tested together, both sides, as primary evidence).
 2. Alternative hardware chosen under EXAP rules (where additional EN 1634-1 assessed evidence can be incorporated).
 3. Alternative hardware assessed to EN 1634 outside EXAP but aligned with emerging PFPF guidance (currently progressing towards a BS standard)..

But it's important to recognise that the adoption of EN 1634 will make little practical difference to fire safety on site. Most failures arise from poor installation or maintenance, incorrect specification, or products simply not fit for purpose and not because of minor technical differences between BS 476-22 and EN 1634.

Phillip Goldberg, joint managing director
Em-B Solutions



Doorsets assembled in the factory or delivered in kit form to site are increasingly prevalent. And they do certainly offer an efficient, pre-certified and simple procurement route: all attractive in a market that is always under pressure to deliver speed and compliance to a tight budget.

But the door itself is rarely the whole story when it is part of a larger, complex project. Every doorset is a collection of components, and each component carries implications around fire safety, acoustic performance, access control integration, usability and aesthetics. And none of these factors sits in isolation. A change to a single hardware element can affect usability, long-term performance, and, critically, compliance.

This is where the role of the qualified and accredited architectural ironmonger

remains pivotal. While a doorset may arrive as a complete unit, the decisions behind its hardware specification should never be generic. How will the door be used? By whom, and how frequently? Does the closer strength truly reflect traffic levels? Is the access control aligned with the fire strategy? Are finishes suitable for the cleaning regime? What is the maintenance plan five years from now?

For example, at Em-B Solutions, we often find that early ironmongery input on complex schemes has exposed issues not immediately apparent from drawings or a schedule alone: hardware combinations that compromise escape requirements, incompatible access control arrangements, and specifications that would struggle under real-world use. Addressing these details at scheduling stage avoided later disruption.

This is not a question of a doorset versus ironmonger bun fight. Doorsets will always form part of a robust compliance strategy. The issue is, in fact, competence. In an environment increasingly shaped by heightened regulatory scrutiny and an emphasis on demonstrable expertise, hardware cannot be treated as a passive or plug-and-play choice. A compliant door is more than a certified assembly. It is the result of informed, accountable specification, and that still demands specialist knowledge. ◆

“This is not a question of a doorset versus ironmonger. The issue is competence. A compliant door is the result of specialist knowledge”

PHILLIP GOLDBERG

What I specified for...



Seaton House

Simon Ayers RegAI on a specification for a boutique hotel that married a heritage aesthetic with performance and compliance.

SDS London delivered the full ironmongery package for 225 doors at Seaton House Hotel, a high-end boutique development in a Grade B listed 1864 building in St Andrews.

Working with European Doorsets, Pacific Building, and architects Upperworth Studios, we co-ordinated a specification that balanced performance, fire compliance, and design intent. This included supplying bespoke lever handles tailored to the interior scheme and testing them with the VingCard locking system to confirm operational compatibility. We also achieved uniform antique brass and bronze finishes across mixed hardware materials, ensuring consistent appearance

even on stainless steel components like hinges and closers. Every item was reviewed and validated during design co-ordination meetings to ensure compliance with fire and security requirements.

Our package delivers a fully integrated solution that supports the hotel's visual identity and operational needs, meeting high expectations for quality, durability and guest experience.

We supplied a full suite of CE-marked mechanical hardware including hinges, locks and door closers, all compliant with the project's fire-safety requirements. Crucially, we ensured a uniform finish across functional

and tactile elements – applying antique brass and bronze tones even to fire-certified stainless steel components, so all hardware matched the interior design intent.

Cam-action closers were selected for guest-facing areas because they require less force to operate, making it easier for guests – especially those carrying heavy luggage – to move comfortably through the hotel. Back-of-house doors were fitted with standard rack-and-pinion closers to balance performance and budget.

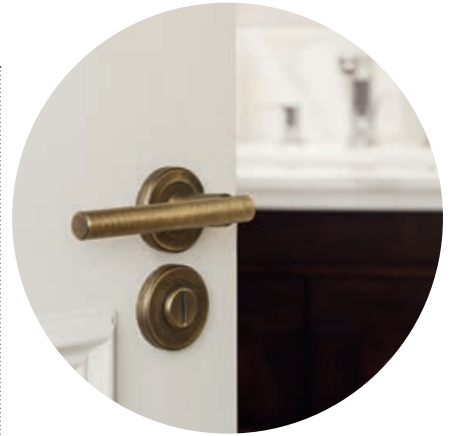
On key fire doors, we specified electromagnetic hold-open closers and devices to allow free movement during the day, while ensuring reliable closure when the fire alarm activates. Finally, all concealed ironmongery was supplied complete with compatible intumescent kits to maintain fire certification across the hardware set.



“We ensured a uniform finish across functional and tactile elements – applying antique brass and bronze tones even to fire-certified stainless steel components so all hardware matched”



PICTURED: Antique brass and bronze hardware was used throughout to match the interior design intent



numerals and signage were coordinated to the same palette. This careful detailing produced a unified, elegant hardware package that subtly reinforces the hotel's crafted and luxurious interior.

Sustainable solutions

Sustainability was a significant focus in our hardware supply for Seaton House Hotel, aligning with the contractor's stringent environmental framework. We implemented multiple measures to minimise environmental impact, including:

- **Plastic-free, minimal packaging:** Eliminated all plastic packaging and used only materials from recycled or natural sources (e.g. recycled cardboard), thereby cutting non-biodegradable waste and excess packaging.
- **Streamlined Deliveries:** Consolidated hardware deliveries to reduce transport emissions. By providing control samples on site for early approval and timing shipments with installation phases, we avoided numerous small drop-offs.
- **Low-Carbon Transport:** Utilised an electric-vehicle courier service for site deliveries whenever possible, further reducing the project's carbon footprint.
- **Durable, Recyclable Products:** Supplied hardware with long lifespans made primarily of recyclable metals (brass, stainless steel). This ensures fewer replacements over time and material recyclability at end-of-life. ◆



A key goal on the project was to complement Seaton House's heritage-inspired interiors with refined hardware. Knurled bronze pull handles were chosen for their rich tactility and visual weight, and lever handles were tested for use on the internal side of VingCard hotel locks, maintaining consistency of design aesthetic throughout each hotel room. To preserve the design language further, we specified concealed cam-action closers in front-of-house areas, limiting visual impact on doors.

While the decorative items were selected in bronze or brass base materials, we applied matching finishes to stainless steel components such as hinges, locks and closers to ensure visual harmony. Even

Proof is in the pudding

The GAI Specification Awards are hard-earned. **AIJ** lifts the lid on the judging process to find out what makes them so prestigious.



From the outside, an awards event can look deceptively simple: a shortlist, an envelope, a winner. But behind every GAI Specification Award sits months of scrutiny, debate, site visits and professional judgement. Far from being a tick-box exercise or a popularity contest, the Spec Awards are deliberately designed to test excellence from every angle of the specification process.

At the heart of the process is an eight-strong judging panel, carefully selected to represent the full ecosystem of architectural ironmongery specification and supply. Architects bring design intent, regulatory awareness and an understanding of real-world project pressures; Registered Architectural Ironmongers (RegAIs), bring technical detail and specification rigour; manufacturers, can assess innovation, performance and manufacturability; and an interior designer, ensures usability, aesthetics and occupant experience are not overlooked.

Rigorous scoring

The initial judging meeting took place in December 2025. Judges received all submissions and supporting imagery a week in advance, allowing time for careful review before any group discussion began.

Each project was then discussed in turn, with judges interrogating the submission against clearly defined scoring criteria. Rather than a simple vote, each judge submitted a confidential score out of 70, based on four weighted categories.

Separate criteria apply for Sustainability and Product categories, ensuring like-for-like comparison.

Once submitted, all scores are totalled and averaged across the panel to produce a final mark. The top four scores in each category progress to the shortlist.

Crucially, the integrity of the process is protected throughout. Any judge with a conflict of interest – whether through involvement in a project or connection to a product – is excluded from both discussion and scoring for that entry.

Site visits: where claims meet reality

Shortlisting is only the beginning. What truly sets the GAI Specification Awards apart is what happens next.

Every shortlisted project is visited in person by an independent inspector. These are not cursory walk-throughs. The inspector examines four different door types, scrutinising how the specification performs in situ. The full specification schedule is requested and checked in detail, ensuring that what was submitted on paper genuinely reflects what has been delivered on site.

Each visit results in a comprehensive written report, assessing accuracy, consistency, technical execution and overall quality.

Only once these reports are complete do the judges reconvene for the final judging panel. Armed with first-hand

Every shortlisted project is visited in person by an independent inspector scrutinising how the specification performs in situ. They are not cursory walk-throughs.



THE PANEL

Jonathan Hall – Allford Hall
Monaghan Morris
Robert Fry – Built Cybernetics plc
Tim Dies – Opitome (RegAI)
Donna Davison – HOPPE UK (RegAI)
Peter Ashworth RegAI – ASSA ABLOY
Jo Milne-Rowe – Codelocks
Anthony Kennedy – Forza Doors
Dr Vanessa Brady OBE – Society of British & International Interior Design

evidence, they debate each project's merits and decide which entries are truly worthy of category wins.

From there, one final discussion remains: selecting the Winner of Winners, the project or product that stands above all others.

Dragons' Den meets ironmongery

In 2025, the Product Categories introduced a bold new judging format, adding another layer of challenge.

While judges still received written submissions in advance, the live judging took place via 10-minute Dragons' Den-style pitches on Teams. Each company had:

- Five minutes to pitch what makes their product genuinely new, innovative or game-changing
- Five minutes of direct questioning from the judges

● Companies were also permitted to pre-supply samples, allowing judges to handle and assess products in real time.

At the end of each pitch, judges scored independently. The result? A process that rewards clarity of thinking, confidence in innovation and the ability to withstand forensic questioning from seasoned professionals.

Proving worth

The defining characteristic of the GAI Specification Awards is authenticity. This is not about polished photography or who you know. It is about due diligence.

With two rounds of judging, site inspections, schedule interrogation and a multi-disciplinary panel, the process reflects the real complexity of specifying architectural ironmongery. It also honours the collaborative relationship between architects, RegAIs, manufacturers and suppliers – recognising that excellence is rarely achieved in isolation.

The outcome is credibility. Winners are not simply "chosen"; they are proven.

What winning really means

For those who take home a Specification Award, the impact extends far beyond the trophy.

Winning signals technical competence, professionalism and trustworthiness to the wider construction industry. Previous winners have reported increased enquiries and new project opportunities directly resulting from the publicity generated by the awards.

The Guild actively promotes winning projects and products, not only to celebrate member success but to demonstrate what can be achieved when a Registered Architectural Ironmonger is involved in creating and supplying a specification.

In a sector where reputation is everything, a GAI Specification Award stands as independent validation that a company is operating at the very top of its game. ♦

Enter a new era

The reforms set out for construction products in the government White Paper herald in momentous change.

Douglas Masterson examines the implications for the ironmongery sector



The UK Government has published its

long-awaited Construction Products Reform White Paper, setting out proposals that will fundamentally reshape how construction products are regulated, tested, certified and specified in the UK.

For the architectural ironmongery sector, and particularly for those involved in fire door assemblies, the proposals represent far more than incremental change. They introduce a new regulatory framework that aims to strengthen safety, improve transparency and increase accountability across the entire product lifecycle. The White Paper acknowledges a number of systemic weaknesses in the current regulatory framework for construction products. bear in mind that this is all subject to consultation before new legislation is drafted.

Historically, the UK regime – inherited from EU legislation – was designed primarily to facilitate trade rather than ensure safety. As a result, regulatory coverage is limited: only products covered by designated standards or technical assessments are currently regulated. The Government estimates that around 37% of the UK construction products market falls within this framework. Other issues identified include:

- A fragmented regulatory landscape that does not adequately address system-level risks
- Weak institutional oversight of testing and certification
- Limited transparency in product performance data
- Poor traceability and low levels of digitalisation
- Inconsistent competence across testing bodies, manufacturers and specifiers
- Insufficient enforcement powers for regulators

The White Paper concludes that these weaknesses have contributed to a culture in which safety has not always been prioritised. The Government therefore proposes a significant strengthening of the

regulatory system, supported by stronger oversight from the national regulator for construction products, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS).

White Paper objectives

The Government's reform programme is built around three core objectives.

● Safety

Ensuring construction products are safe for both intended and foreseeable use is the central aim. This will involve stronger oversight of testing and certification, clearer product information, improved traceability and greater regulatory powers to intervene where risks are identified.

● Growth and innovation

The White Paper emphasises the need for a stable and predictable regulatory environment that supports innovation and economic growth while avoiding unnecessary trade barriers.



“The proposals introduce a new regulatory framework that aims to strengthen safety across the entire product lifecycle”

Alignment with European regulatory reforms is therefore a key consideration.

● Accountability

The reforms also aim to establish clearer responsibilities across the construction product lifecycle. Manufacturers, importers, distributors, designers, specifiers and installers will all be expected to demonstrate competence and ensure that products are appropriate for their intended use.

The White Paper itself is structured in three broad sections: an assessment of the current system, proposals for reform and the next steps for consultation and implementation.

The wider reform landscape

The White Paper forms part of a wider programme of regulatory reform that has been underway since the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017.

This included Dame Judith Hackitt's Building a Safer Future review in 2018. It recommended a new regulatory framework based on clear dutyholders, stronger competence requirements and the creation of a "golden thread" of building information.

It also follows the Morrell-Day Review in 2023 which highlighted inconsistencies in testing oversight, weak audit processes and insufficient transparency in certification schemes. And the Construction Products Reform Green Paper last year consulted on a wide range of potential reforms, including stronger market surveillance, digital product information systems and expanded regulatory powers. The White Paper now sets out the Government's formal response and proposed direction of travel.

Product requirements

Under the proposed framework, all construction products will fall under one of two regulatory routes.

1) Designated Standards Route

Products covered by designated standards will require:

- A Declaration of Performance ▶

- UKCA conformity marking
- Mandatory safety and performance information

- Compliance with new Assessment and Verification Systems (AVS)

These systems replace the previous AVCP levels used under the EU Construction Products Regulation.

2) General Safety Requirement (GSR) route

Products that do not fall within designated standards will be regulated under a new General Safety Requirement.

Manufacturers will be required to carry out a structured safety risk assessment covering intended use and foreseeable misuse, identifying hazards and implementing measures to eliminate or mitigate risks before products are placed on the market.

A further category will apply to products considered "critical to safe construction" where failure could lead to serious harm.

Fire doors are explicitly included in this category, meaning enhanced requirements are likely to apply to associated components such as ironmongery. These measures may include additional requirements around design assurance, installation competence and traceability.

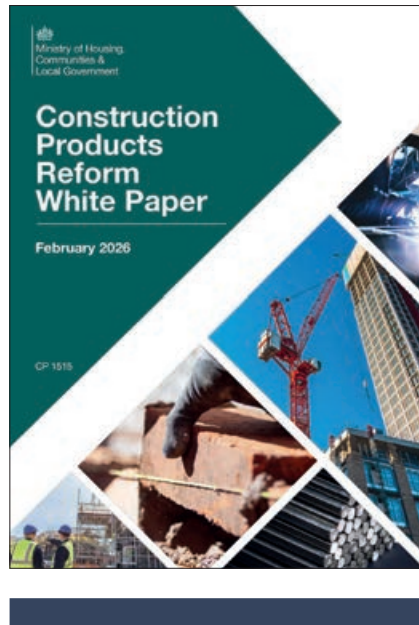
EU, CE marking and third-party certification

The updated EU Construction Products Regulation (EU-CPR 2024) introduces major changes including digital product passports, stronger sustainability metrics and increased transparency in testing and certification.

The UK Government has indicated that it intends to maintain close alignment with many of these principles, particularly where this supports safety and reduces friction in cross-border trade.

However, the UK will retain the ability to diverge where European standards do not meet national safety objectives.

The White Paper provides long-awaited clarification on conformity marking. CE marking will continue to be recognised indefinitely in Great Britain in order to avoid



“Neither CE nor UKCA marks should be interpreted as safety marks, rather as indicators that products meet requirements”

unnecessary disruption to industry. At the same time, the UKCA mark will remain the mandatory conformity mark for products regulated under the GB Construction Products Regulation.

In Northern Ireland, CE and UK(NI) marking will continue to apply in line with the Windsor Framework arrangements.

The Government also emphasises that neither CE nor UKCA marks should be interpreted as safety marks, but rather as indicators that products meet the relevant regulatory requirements.

The proposals represent a significant shift in how certification systems are governed.

Key reforms include:

- Licensing of all UK Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs)

- Mandatory approval of third-party certification schemes by the national regulator
- Greater transparency in certificates, including disclosure of test results and limitations

- New powers for regulators to suspend or revoke certification schemes

These changes are intended to rebuild trust in product testing and certification, particularly in safety-critical areas such as fire doors.

Product information and marketing

The White Paper places strong emphasis on the quality and clarity of product information.

Manufacturers and distributors will be required to provide comprehensive and accessible information covering:

- Product characteristics and intended use
- Installation and maintenance guidance
- Applicable standards and test methods
- Unique product identifiers
- Storage and transport requirements

Misleading or inaccurate marketing claims will become an enforceable offence. For specifiers, this means product choices will need to be supported by clear and up-to-date evidence of performance.

Competence and accountability

The Government identifies widespread competence issues across the construction product supply chain.

Under the proposed reforms:

- Designers and principal contractors will need to demonstrate competence
- Conformity Assessment Bodies must show robust technical capability
- Organisations placing safety-critical products on the market must provide assurance of competence across their supply chains
- Responsibility for ensuring product suitability will also extend to those specifying or selecting products for installation, including architects, designers and specifiers.
- Parties who substitute products will ▶

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GAI is encouraging members to submit responses to support a co-ordinated industry response

similarly need to demonstrate that performance requirements are maintained.

Digitalisation and sustainability

The White Paper signals a shift toward digital-first product information. Future requirements are expected to include:

- Digital product records for all products
- Unique digital identifiers such as QR codes linking to verified information
- A central Construction Product Information Library containing test data and certificates
- Product data templates to support BIM integration and the "golden thread"

These changes will significantly increase transparency and traceability but will also place greater responsibility on manufacturers to ensure the accuracy of product data.

Environmental performance is also expected to play a growing role within the regulatory framework. Future standards may require: Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs); lifecycle carbon reporting; and digital product passports containing sustainability metrics. Manufacturers able to demonstrate durability and whole-life performance are likely to gain a competitive advantage.

Market surveillance and enforcement

The White Paper proposes a major strengthening of the regulator's powers.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) will gain authority to:

- Require disclosure of full test data
- License and oversee Conformity Assessment Bodies
- Remove unsafe products from the market
- Issue civil penalties and criminal sanctions
- Conduct backstop testing where certification systems fail

These measures are intended to create a more proactive and visible regulatory regime capable of responding quickly to safety risks.

Northern Ireland will continue to operate under a distinct regulatory framework. Products placed on the Northern Ireland market will follow EU-CPR requirements, while still being able to enter the Great Britain market where CE marking will continue to be recognised.

For manufacturers and suppliers operating across the UK, this will require careful management of dual regulatory pathways.

What this means for GAI Members

Fire doors are identified as products that will always be "critical to safe construction", meaning associated ironmongery will be subject to enhanced scrutiny. Key implications include:

- Greater evidence requirements for fire door component performance
- Stricter controls on product substitution
- Increased transparency in testing and certification
- Mandatory digital product information
- Higher expectations around competence and supply-chain assurance

Manufacturers will need to demonstrate stronger evidence of compliance, maintain accurate digital product data and ensure marketing claims are fully supported by technical evidence. ♦

For a technical briefing on the White Paper visit www.gai.org.uk

What to do now

GAI members may wish to begin preparing by:

- Mapping product portfolios against the new regulatory routes
- Reviewing fire door system testing evidence and approved configurations
- Auditing product information for accuracy and completeness
- Preparing for digital product identifiers and structured product data
- Engaging with certification bodies about future disclosure requirements
- Reviewing sustainability documentation and environmental reporting
- Early preparation will help organisations adapt as the regulatory framework develops.

Consultation

Two consultations are currently open and will run until 20 May 2026:

- Construction Products Reform White Paper consultation
- Consultation on the proposed General Safety Requirement

GAI is encouraging members to review the proposals and submit responses to Government while also sharing feedback with the organisation to support a coordinated industry response.

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

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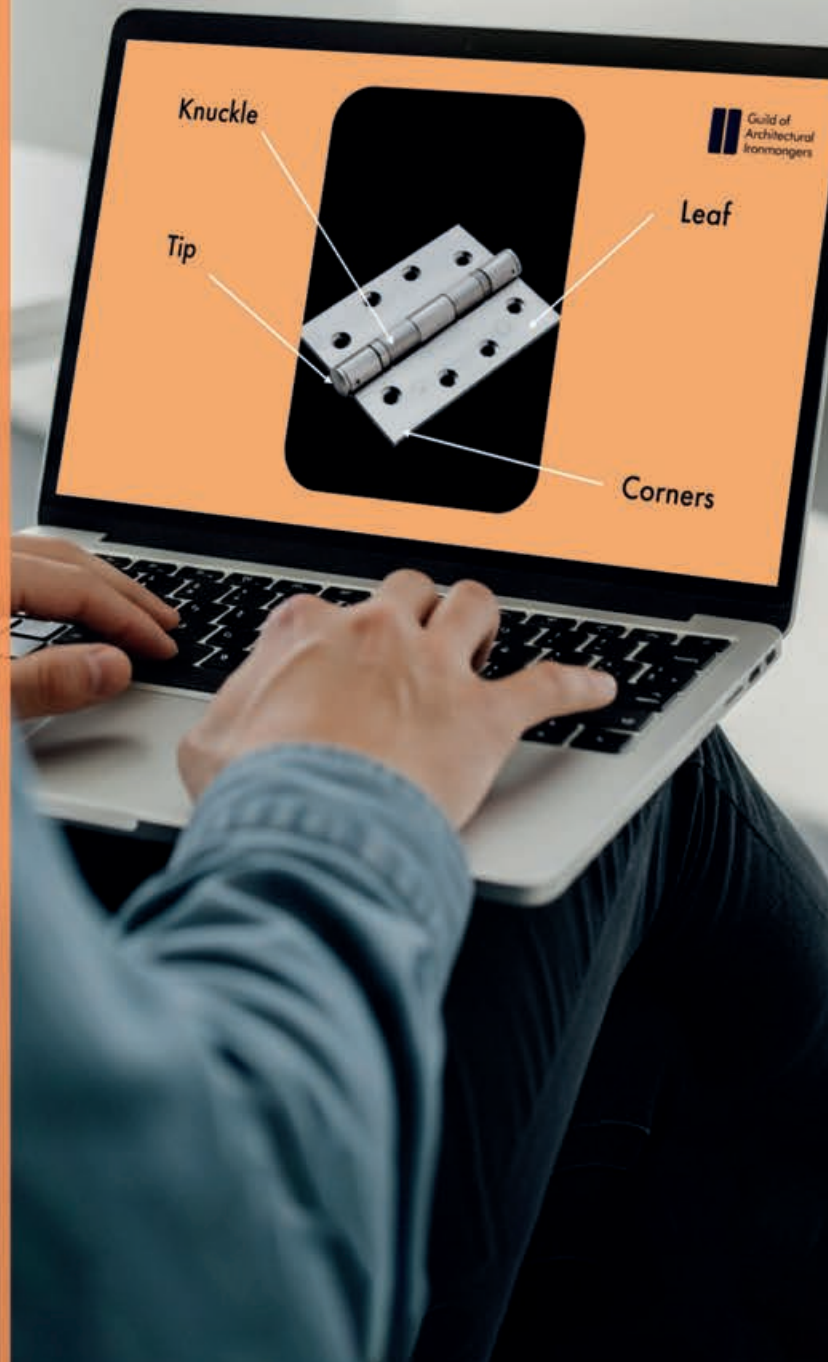


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“Architecture is really about well-being. I think that people want to feel good in a space... On the one hand, it’s about shelter, but it’s also about pleasure.”

ZARA HADID

ABOVE: ZahaHadid.
Image: Dmitry Ternovoy
RIGHT: LeCorbusier.
Image: Joop van Bilsen

Zaha Hadid

“There are 360 degrees, so why stick to one?”

“I always hated the idea that architecture is about objects; it’s much more about spaces and sequences.”

Norman Foster

“Architecture is an expression of values.”

“If you weren’t an optimist, it would be impossible to be an architect.”

Frank Lloyd Wright

“The purpose of architecture is to shelter and enhance our life on earth and to fulfill one’s belief in the nobility of their existence.”

Renzo Piano

“One of the great beauties of architecture is that each time, it is like life starting all over again.”

Louis Kahn

“Even a brick wants to be something.”

Frank Gehry

“Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness.”

Charles Eames

“The details are not the details. They make the design.”

César Pell

“I see my buildings as pieces of cities, and in my designs, I try to make them into responsible and contributing citizens.”

Alvar Aalto

“Form must have a content, and that content must be linked with nature.”

Eileen Gray

“To create, one must first question everything.”

Eero Saarinen

“The purpose of architecture is to shelter and enhance man’s life on earth and to fulfill his belief in the nobility of his existence.”




“A house is a machine for living in”

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Great minds?

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Dear GAI...

I am aware that the latest revision of British Standard BS 8214 Code of Practice for fire doors is imminent. What will this revision mean for the ironmongery industry?



The fire door industry has witnessed a

steady tightening of expectations since the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the subsequent reshaping of the regulatory landscape. Now, BS 8214, one of the most widely referenced British Standards underpinning fire door specification and installation has undergone a full and fundamental revision, marking the most significant change since the 2016 edition. GAI has been greatly involved in the revision process, having also been involved in all previous versions, with the standard first being published in 1990. The 2026 version is due to be published in Spring.

For GAI members and the wider architectural ironmongery and door sector, this revised standard is not simply a technical update: it is a shift in culture. It reflects the new regulatory mindset created by the Building Safety Act, the emphasis on competence, and the uncompromising requirement for evidence led decision making across fire safety.

BS 8214:2026 seeks to close the gaps in past practice and its implications are profound for both the fire door and ironmongery sectors. The overarching context for this revision parallels that of the Morrell Report: a national re-evaluation of how buildings, building products and safety critical systems are assessed, evidenced and approved. BS 8214:2026 relates directly to:

- fire door manufacturing, installation and inspection

- the new legislative environment that requires traceability, competence and accountability
- the rapidly expanding range of fire door materials and assemblies used in the UK market.

Crucially, the standard now widens its scope from previous versions to pedestrian fire resisting and smoke control doors of all types. It also includes and defines doorsets, door assemblies and door kits. For ironmongery professionals, this is a welcome clarification that aligns closely with the work and expectations of the GAI DHF Code of Practice for Fire and Escape Doors (www.firecode.org.uk) which is specifically named in the standard.

The standard introduces a series of landmark changes, many of which reshape the role of ironmongers, specifiers and installers.

This is of huge importance as it emphasises that those who create specifications must demonstrate their ongoing competency

1. A universal, material-agnostic standard

BS 8214 is no longer restricted to timber fire doors. It now encompasses timber doors, steel doors, composite doors, metal-framed glazed doors and glass doors. This reflects the evolving supply chain and ensures ironmongery must be compatible with and evidenced for a far wider range of materials.

2. A shift towards supporting evidence

This is perhaps the most significant philosophical change. The standard deliberately reduces prescription and instead tells users:

- "That supporting evidence must be obtained to demonstrate that a fire door, with its hardware, can perform as required."

- This moves the industry from "following recipes" to "demonstrating proof".

For hardware, that means:

- no unverified substitutions
- hardware must match the fire door's tested configuration
- intumescent kits and protection must replicate test evidence
- electronic locking and access control must be included in the door's supporting evidence

The implication is clear: ironmongery is an essential part of the tested system – not an afterthought.

3. Restructuring to reflect real world construction

The new edition follows the order of the actual project lifecycle: roles and responsibilities; specification; supporting



evidence; design and installation; handover; and maintenance.

This mirrors how doors actually move through the supply chain and clarifies who carries responsibility at each step. For GAI members, this provides a clear framework for demonstrating compliance and competence.

4. Competence embedded throughout

Much like the Building Safety Act and Morrell Report, BS 8214:2026 embeds the principle of competence across: specifiers, manufacturers, ironmongery consultants, installers, inspectors and maintainers.

The definition aligns with the Building Safety Act: skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours. The standard also explicitly states that "the specification of fire doors and hardware should be undertaken only by

persons with the appropriate competence."

This is of huge importance for the hardware industry as it emphasises that those who create specifications must not only be competent but also demonstrate their ongoing competency.

Implications for ironmongery sector

While the whole standard has profound meaning for GAI members, the following issues are most relevant for the ironmongery industry.

1. Essential vs non-essential hardware:

Annex D provides the clearest definition to date of what constitutes essential hardware (performance critical)

This includes:

- hinges (BS EN 1935)

- locks and latches (BS EN 12209, BS EN 14846)
- closing devices (BS EN 1154)
- powered pedestrian swing door operators with self-closing function (BS EN 17372)
- door coordinators (BS EN 1158)
- panic and emergency exit devices (BS EN 1125, BS EN 179, BS EN 13637)
- intumescent seals and hardware protection

These items directly influence the fire performance of the door and must match the tested configuration. It also features non-essential hardware (functional). This includes lever handles, pull handles, kick plates, signage and other items that do not contribute to fire performance but may still affect it if incorrectly fitted.

2. Substitution

Hardware substitution is one of the most common and dangerous failings seen in fire doors. BS 8214:2026 addresses this practice by stating the following:

- Each component used in a fire door assembly should be covered by the supporting evidence that is available for the assembly, which can be original test information for the assembly or evidence that allows valid approved substitutions
- Door hardware for steel fire doors should be specified early in the process, prior to manufacture as once specified, there is little or no room for substitution.

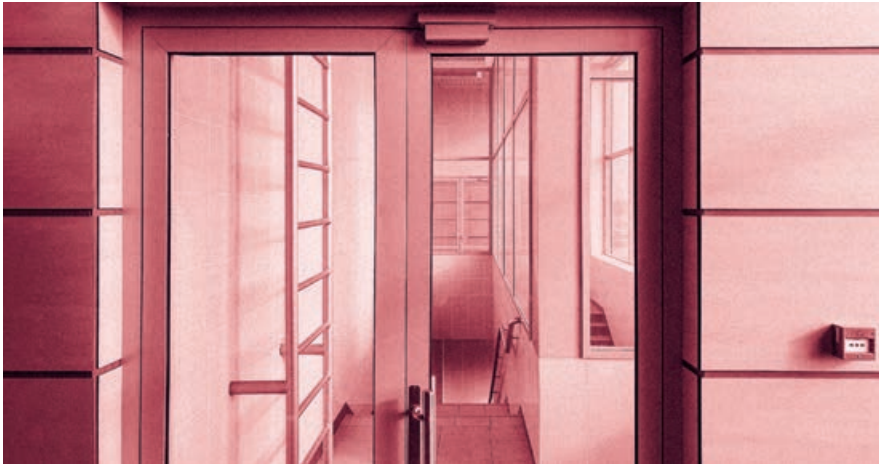
This reaffirms the ironmonger's role in protecting the fire door's tested performance, not simply supplying products.

3. Integration of electronic access control

The standard clearly addresses modern electronic hardware: electromagnetic locks, electric strikes, electronic escape and panic hardware, card readers, powered door operators and door automation interfaces.

All must be validated within the door's supporting evidence and must not be retrofitted based on contractor preference.

This is a major development for the access control sector and an area where ironmongers' expertise is crucial. ▶



4. Smoke Control

The standard introduces strict and updated guidance on smoke seals and smoke control doors, including:

- Sa classifications under BS EN 1634-3
 - threshold sealing — removing the historic "head and jambs only" allowance
 - the requirement for bottom seals (usually drop seals)
 - recognition that smoke control and accessibility must be balanced
- For ironmongers, this means:
- seal selection is more complex
 - door operation forces must be carefully controlled
 - door closers must overcome both smoke seals and latches

Architectural Ironmongers will increasingly need to advise on the interaction between seals, closers, hinges and automation.

5. Security

Annex A addresses the increasingly common requirement for dual performance doors, particularly apartment entrance doors. Where security and fire resistance coexist, the door must be tested and evidenced as a combined system, including: locks, cylinders, reinforcement plates, door furniture, frames and electronic hardware

This is vital for PAS 24, TS 007, LPS 1175 and other security standards which are now named within BS 8214. The message is clear:

security hardware must not compromise fire performance, and vice versa.

6. Installation & Handover:

The standard introduces:

- detailed guidance on sealing the frame-to-wall gap
- specific approved scenarios for timber frames (30 and 60 minute)
- a recommended checklist for installers
- clear expectations for handover documentation

That all door hardware should be fitted in such a way as to ensure that the fire-resisting properties of the door are not compromised, including any tested or approved fixings or intumescent protection.

This aligns with GAI's emphasis on traceability and record-keeping and will help ironmongers support installers with compliant hardware schedules and fixing specifications.

7. Maintenance

The standard reinforces the need for:

- regular inspections
- replacement hardware matching the original specification
- maintenance by competent persons
- documentation to be retained for the building's life.

This ties directly into the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and requirements for quarterly and yearly door checks in residential buildings. ♦

Conclusions – A Step Change for the Ironmongery Profession

Just as the Morrell Report called for honesty, transparency and competence in construction product testing, BS 8214:2026 demands the same of our industry. It sets out clear principles:

- Fire doors must be treated as tested systems, not as collections of parts.
- Hardware must be evidenced, compatible, and installed as tested.
- Competence is no longer optional across all stages of fire door and is central to compliance.
- Security and fire performance must be assessed together, not looked at separately.
- Supporting evidence is the backbone of responsible specification.

For GAI members, this revision reinforces the irreplaceable role of the architectural ironmonger as the specialist who ensures that specification, design ambition, performance requirements and regulatory compliance all align. The new BS 8214 challenges but also empowers us. It strengthens the profession, elevates standards of competency and aligns our work with the wider culture of building safety that has emerged post-Grenfell.

A Guide to Standard is due to be produced on BS 8214 once published which will be available on 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



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GAI TALK

Rachael Bliss
GAI chief executive



In this Spring edition, one message is unmistakable: our industry is no longer being asked to change – it is being required to. From the transition to EN 1634 and the full revision of BS 8214, to the reforms set out in the government White Paper, architectural ironmongery now sits firmly within a new regulatory and cultural landscape. The direction of travel is clear: greater transparency, demonstrable competence and whole-system accountability. This is not incremental evolution. It is a step change.

Fire doors are no longer viewed as isolated components, but as tested, evidenced systems. Hardware is no longer a schedule add-on, but a safety-critical element requiring proof, traceability and professional judgement. For the GAI, this moment represents both challenge and opportunity. Challenge, because expectations of our profession have never been higher. Opportunity, because few disciplines are better placed to respond. Registered Professionals understand systems thinking. They understand compliance. They understand the intersection of design intent and real-world performance.

Our role at the GAI is to ensure that this expertise is recognised, strengthened and clearly evidenced. Through updated CPD structures, technical guidance, active engagement with Government consultations and continued promotion of Registered Professional status as a benchmark of competence, we are positioning our members not simply to adapt – but to lead. The built environment is demanding safer, smarter and more accountable delivery. Architectural ironmongery must be at the centre of that conversation. Together, we will ensure it is.

GAI Community...

Updated GAI CPD Model for 2026



ABOVE The revised CPD model meets the emphasis on demonstrating competence

An updated GAI CPD Model for 2026 has been introduced, strengthening its alignment with emerging competence frameworks across the built environment.

The revised structure reflects increasing emphasis on demonstrable, recorded competence — particularly in light of the Building Safety Act and emerging frameworks such as BS 8670-2. It provides a clear, structured approach for Stage 3 qualified professionals to evidence ongoing development and maintain Registered Professional status.

While the annual requirement for 20 CPD points remains unchanged, the 2026 model places greater clarity around how Core CPDs align with the SKEB framework, specifically supporting the development of defined skills, knowledge and behaviours. This structured mapping ensures that learning activity is not only undertaken, but

meaningfully connected to recognised professional standards and expectations. Please visit the GAI website or My GAI App to download the updated GAI CPD Model for 2026.



ABOVE The CPD aligns with the SKEB framework



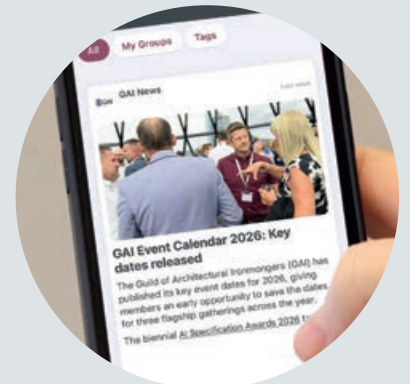
My GAI App Officially Launches

Members can now access Guild resources more easily than ever following the official launch of the My GAI App.

Created for GAI members, the app provides convenient mobile access to event bookings, news updates, member resources and personalised account information. With push notifications enabled, important Guild announcements and reminders can be delivered directly to your device in real time.

The introduction of My GAI marks a significant step forward in the Guild's digital development, bringing core services together within one intuitive platform. Whether checking event details, reviewing education updates or keeping track of Guild news, members can now engage with GAI activity wherever they are.

The MyGAI App is available to download now via the GAI website and through the Apple App Store and Google Play. Further enhancements are planned as part of the app's ongoing development.



Planning for 2026 is well underway, with the Guild confirming the headline dates for its flagship events this year. Members are encouraged to secure the following dates in their diaries:

- **AI Specification Awards 2026**

Friday 15 May 2026

- **GAI AGM & Summer Event**

Wednesday 15 July 2026

- **GAI Education Awards 2026**

Friday 20 November 2026

Community Hub meetings, webinars and regional activities will continue throughout the year, ensuring regular opportunities for engagement, networking and technical insight.

Full event details and booking information will be released in due course via the GAI website and My GAI App.

GAI to exhibit at The Fire Safety Event 2026

Engagement with the wider fire safety community continues in April as the Guild prepares to exhibit at The Fire Safety Event 2026, taking place at the NEC Birmingham.

Visitors will find the GAI team on Stand 4/J90, where discussions will centre on competence, fire door hardware specification and the importance of compliant product information.

The exhibition brings together manufacturers, consultants, contractors

and enforcement bodies from across the fire safety sector, providing an important platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing. The Guild's presence reinforces its commitment to raising standards in fire door hardware and supporting members with up-to-date technical guidance.

Members attending the event are encouraged to visit the stand and connect with the team.

BELOW: Raffles at The OWO, winner of winners at 2024 AI Specification Awards



AI Specification Awards 2026 shortlists confirmed

The shortlists for the AI Specification Awards 2026 have been confirmed, setting the stage for the awards ceremony on Friday 15 May 2026 at IET London: Savoy Place.

Organised by the GAI in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and sponsored by ASSA ABLOY, the biennial awards recognise excellence in architectural ironmongery specification across projects and product innovation.

Following an intensive first stage of

judging, the official shortlists showcase projects and products demonstrating technical rigour, compliance, design integration and long-term performance. Reaching this stage represents a notable professional endorsement for all involved.

The winners will be announced in May when the industry gathers to celebrate the projects, products and teams defining specification excellence today. Tickets for the AI Specification Awards 2026 are now available.

This year's shortlisted entries are:

Commercial & Retail Award (Sponsored by Allegion)

- 1 Paddington Square – Franchi plc/TP Bennett
- Plot 9a Manchester – Allgood Ltd/Jon Matthews Architects
- 63–66 Coleman Street – 3v Architectural Hardware/Emrys Architects
- Five St Philips Birmingham – Allgood Ltd/5Plus Architects

Hospitality Award (Sponsored by Forza Doors)

- "Britannic Explorer" by Belmond – HAF@ John Planck Ltd/JK Interiors

- Fulham FC, The Riverside – Allgood Ltd/Stuart Forbes Associates
- Skinners' Hall – izé Ltd/Carter Owers
- The Park Hyatt London – Hafele UK Ltd/Studio Moren

Residential Award (Sponsored by Frank Allart)

- 6 Charles Street – SDS London Ltd/MSMR Architects
- J1 Wood Wharf – Allgood Ltd/Grid Architects
- Private Residence, Richmond – SDS London Ltd/McDaniel Woolf
- The Blore Building and Cloister, Lambeth Palace – 3v Architectural Hardware/Wright & Wright Architects

Public, Health & Education Award (Sponsored by Access2)

- Ampleforth College – Em-B Solutions Ltd/ALP Architecture
- Gayhurst School – 3v Architectural Hardware/Morse Webb Architects
- Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease – Em-B Solutions Ltd/I&G Ltd
- Walworth Town Hall Restoration & Regeneration – HAF @ John Planck Ltd/Feix & Merlin

International Award (Sponsored by dormakaba)

- Cape Grace – Consort Architectural Hardware/1508 London
- Kwong Wah Hospital Redevelopment Phase 1 – Key Technologies International Ltd/Simon Kwan & Associates Ltd
- Ma Chai Hang Sports Centre – Key Technologies International Ltd/TFP Farrells Limited

Small Projects Award (Sponsored by CodeLocks)

- One Great Cumberland Place – Allgood Ltd/Gort Scott
- Overdale – Em-B Solutions Ltd/Sturman & Co
- Private Residence, Richmond – SDS London Ltd/McDaniel Woolf
- The Edinburgh Gin Distillery Visitor's Centre – Hafele UK Ltd/Staran Architects

Sustainability Award (Sponsored by Zoo Hardware)

- 93 Mortimer Street – 3v Architectural Hardware/Robson Warren
- Five St Philips Birmingham – Allgood Ltd/5Plus Architects
- Plot 9a Manchester – Allgood Ltd/Jon Matthews Architects
- The London College of Fashion – d line eisenware limited/Allies & Morrison

Product Design & Innovation – Mechanical Award

- AR27 Split Spindle – HOPPE (UK) Ltd
- DC850 Concealed Closer – ASSA ABLOY
- FSB AFL® Adaptively Flush-Mounted Bearing – Franz Schneider Brakel GmbH Co KG
- VERTO-VT 845 – SIMONSWERK UK Ltd

Product Design & Innovation – Electronic Award (Sponsored by ADSA)

- ES8100 V-Lock – ASSA ABLOY
- Finfort Smart Auto-Deadbolt Nightlatch – Finfort Locks
- GU DTN80 UFO Automatic Underfloor Operator – Gretsch Unitas Ltd

Technical Briefing 45: understanding CBAM implications

Technical Briefing 45 has been published, providing members with a clear overview of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and its potential implications for the architectural ironmongery sector.

CBAM introduces reporting requirements and potential financial adjustments for certain carbon-intensive goods entering the EU, including products containing steel and aluminium. While the UK's long-term regulatory position continues to evolve, the mechanism is already influencing procurement discussions, embodied carbon reporting and supply chain transparency.

The briefing outlines:

- The purpose and scope of CBAM
- How it may affect ironmongery products and component materials
- Key considerations for documentation and supplier engagement

As sustainability and carbon accountability become increasingly central to construction decision-making, understanding the commercial and compliance implications of CBAM is essential.

Technical Briefing 45 is available to download from the GAI website and My GAI App.

“As sustainability and carbon accountability become increasingly central to decision-making, understanding the implications of CBAM is essential ”



Induction in Architectural Ironmongery: supporting structured onboarding

A new online training module, Induction in Architectural Ironmongery, has been introduced to support onboarding and early-stage learning across the membership.

Developed in response to feedback from last year's Member Voice survey, the two-hour online course provides a structured introduction to terminology, product categories and the role of ironmongery within the wider built environment. It is particularly suited to new starters, apprentices and those working alongside ironmongery professionals who require foundational knowledge.

Delivered online and fully self-paced, the course offers organisations a consistent way to introduce new employees to the sector and establish a baseline understanding from the outset.

The Induction in Architectural Ironmongery course is available at £75 + VAT per person for GAI members and £100 + VAT for non-members. Further details can be found via the GAI website. www.gai.org.uk





Lintels, columns and staircases are among the structural architecture items that can serve functional role but also be seen as beautiful

“We can see that what started as a practical guide for structural safety evolved into an appreciation of beauty”
JOSÉ RAMÓN

Deep diving

A new series on Architectural Elements That Changed History invites us to look beyond the components of a space



Architecture is typically remembered through iconic buildings – but sometimes, it's a single element that reshapes how we build, design, and experience space.

A new special series, authored by a structural expert, is exploring the architectural components that transformed construction, design thinking, and the built environment – combining technical insight with compelling storytelling. Architectural Elements That Changed History - found on the dormakaba blog online and enriched with 3D motion graphics – kicked off earlier this year examining staircases, continued with lintels and columns and is still in progress. The eight-part series invites us to think beyond the surface. For example the exploration about pillars will resonate with the ironmongery fraternity: “We can see that what started as a practical guide for



structural safety evolved into an appreciation of beauty. It is reassuring to know that, historically, what is functional and well suited for its purpose is also seen as beautiful. This echoes the sentiments of philosophers Plato and St. Augustine, and later affirmed by architects like Gaudí or Mies van der Rohe, that “beauty is the radiance of truth,” not just a superficial aesthetic choice.”

The series is written by José Ramón an architect with his own studio who also teaches at Rey Juan Carlos University and is the author of three books including “The Naked Leaf” (a novel about the life of architect Frank Lloyd Wright). ♦

Follow the series at <https://blog.dormakaba.com/category/architecture>



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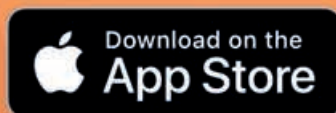
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Access Guild news, technical resources and event information wherever you are. Available on Apple and Android devices, My GAI helps members stay informed, connected and up to date.



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