

# SMG NEWS

magazine



  
HUGH MACKAY  
carpets



# VICTORIA CARPETS®



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
CARPET MANUFACTURERS  
VICTORIA CARPETS  
KIDDERMINSTER



## ROYAL VELVET

Royal Velvet is the new look, Royal Victoria. A 100% wool offer available in 20 timeless shades with a pallet inspired by the muted browns, blue's and greens you would find in the British hedgerows.

This is a carpet that will stand the test of time, both from its colour offer and high quality natural finish.

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[MyVictoria.co.uk](http://MyVictoria.co.uk)





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COVER:**

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Ben Lawers**

Hugh Mackay Natural Weave, Highlow Light Beige





# Cumbrian

NATURE AT ITS BEST

Colour shown: Kirkstone

Bring a breath of fresh air into your home with Cumbrian, our superb range of wool rich cut pile carpet, inspired by the glorious landscape of the English Lake District. Crafted with loving care at our mill in Lancashire, this stunning 18 colour range is available in 40oz or 50oz and 4m or 5m **guaranteed full widths**. As always we've only used the best raw materials to bring you a carpet of genuine quality. **A truly British carpet** for those who appreciate the finer things.



For samples and further information please call **01706 639 866** or visit [penthousecarpets.co.uk](http://penthousecarpets.co.uk)



STYLE | COLOUR | COMFORT



# WELCOME

## A few words from SMG...



### Dear Members

**It's been over a year since our last issue and wow – what a year it's been!**

Going back to our last edition in Spring 2020, who would have believed the challenges that were coming which we have all had to face, adapt to, and overcome. Covid, lockdown, furlough, working from home, a huge loss of retail sales followed by a massive surge in business for Independent Flooring Retailers. Raw material shortages, delivery problems, price increases, and challenges with regards to imports and non-mainland deliveries – we've had it all. But as I write this, it feels as if we are coming out of the other side – stronger, sleeker and more determined than ever to succeed.

The Independent Flooring Retailers have shone through these challenging times. Where others have lost custom, this sector has flourished. With customers' focus turning from holidays and cars to making their homes cosy, secure and comfortable - there has never been a better time to be involved in the home improvement and homewares sectors.

We always knew that the personal service, knowledge and skills of the Independent were what brought customers back time and again and made the retailer strong in the face of online trading and threats from the multiples. If ever this were proven to be true, it was during this past year.

Many of our retailers took the lock down opportunity to re-evaluate their business, improve their stores, re-arrange their displays and hone their supplier offers to suit the local market. This forward-thinking approach and flexibility meant that once lockdown eased and retailer were able to re-open they were match fit and ready to go.

Personally, I've never been prouder to be involved in this business – it is filled with fantastic people on both the retail and supplier sides and this partnership makes every aspect of the business a pleasure. SMG Members are certainly a shining light in the economic gloom.

Let us hope that the remainder of 2021 is onwards and upwards (and more measured) for us all!

This issue of SMG News is packed with all your favourite features as well as lots of news and topical comment. We have a fabulous scoop for our 'Question Time' feature – we are honoured that Keith Morgan, sales director with Hugh Mackay has kindly taken the time to answer our questions. Keith is in an excellent position to give a balanced view of business having been involved in both retail and supply, so have a look at page 28 to enjoy reading his thoughts.

Starring in our 'At the Sharp End' feature we have James Camilleri from My Victoria – a company constantly vibrant and embracing of change. Read what he has to say on page 21.

A definite highlight for me is our 'Member Focus' which this issue features our long-standing SMG Members at Marshall Carpets. Norman Marshall has been with SMG for more than 20 years and has a wonderful store in Worthing. Celebrating 30 years of trading this very year, it's a fantastic time to catch up and see how things are on the south coast.

All that remains for me to say is that this SMG News is jam packed with news, insights and information to keep you up to date and make for what we hope is a very interesting read. If you have any suggestions for features you might like to see in this publication, we always welcome reader feedback and ideas.

SMG are on Facebook, so please do come and like our page to keep up to date on all things Group related and to share with us any interesting projects you have been involved with. We would love to see your pictures.

**On behalf of SMG, I'd like to thank our Members and Suppliers for their continued support and to wish you a very successful summer 2021.**

Kind regards

**Mike Reed**  
Head of Group Operations



**SMG The National Furnishing Group**

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LASTING LOOKS  
• Naturally Wool •  
HOME COMFORT



# Woodland Heather Twist

*by*

**CORMAR**  
CARPET CO

We're pleased to announce the  
launch of our latest new range,  
Woodland Heather Twist.

The latest addition to our popular wool twist collection is a premier, fine quality, tenth gauge carpet, available in two qualities, Elite and Deluxe, made from 80% Pure New Wool, 10% Polypropylene and 10% Tuftbond yarn.

Suitable for extra heavy domestic use, Woodland Heather Twist is ideal for high traffic areas such as stairways and hallways.

Manufactured by Cormar in 14 popular heather shades, it has a strong palette including creams, beiges and greys such as Pine Nut, Travertine and Silver Fox and is available in 4 and 5 metre widths. Durable, resilient and luxurious, Woodland Heather Twist combines the natural beauty of wool with long lasting looks.

[www.cormarcarpets.co.uk](http://www.cormarcarpets.co.uk)  
[portal.cormarcarpets.co.uk](http://portal.cormarcarpets.co.uk)





## NEW MYTH & MOOR DESIGNS FROM AXMINSTER CARPETS

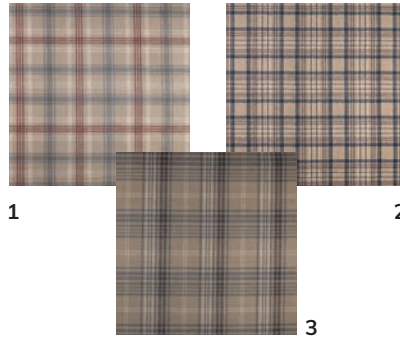
CRAFTED BY AXMINSTER WOVEN FOR YOU...

Ready in just four weeks, this innovative service, by the skilled team at Axminster Carpets, gives you the assurance of knowing that your carpet has been beautifully crafted to your requirements, in their Devon based factory.

The products included in this service are; Hazy Days and Myth & Moor. Myth and Moor is a range of striking tartan and check patterns. This versatile print can be used in any room, from a modern space to a traditional country house.

Axminster Carpets are proud to announce the launch of 3 new designs to their striking Myth & Moor Collection:

- Breezy Day (see below no.1)
- Village Brook (see below no.2)
- Autumn Fall (see below no.3)



If you are already a 'Axminster Carpets - Woven to Order' stockist then your local sales representative will be in touch, to arrange a visit and to add the samples for these new designs to your Axminster Carpets display.

For more information, or if you are interested in becoming a stockist please contact:

retail@axminstercarpets.uk



## ITC NATURAL LUXURY FLOORING LAUNCHES GALAXY, A STUNNING NEW RANGE FOR SUMMER.



Galaxy

ITC are proud and delighted to say that they continue to develop exciting new products and their latest stunning addition, Galaxy, will be available for sampling in June and July.

Galaxy was created using type 6.0 nylon, which gives a fine lusted effect, like the most beautiful of viscose carpets. Galaxy is hand-woven and hand sheared to reflect an antiqued type of finish in a random cut & loop, to give this unique appearance.

The combination of all these factors gives you a carpet that reflects pure luxury coupled with the practicality and benefits of a durable nylon fibre. With a heavy domestic and general commercial rating Galaxy is perfect for all areas of the home, including stairs and hallways.

Available in 4 & 5 metre widths, and a range of 8 on-trend colours, Galaxy will be held in stock at ITC's UK distribution centre.

As with all of the Campeone and Connoisseur collections, Galaxy is available in made to measure rugs in sizes up to 500cm wide. A selection of tape finishes, which are exclusive, chic and co-ordinate with the chosen carpet are available.

For more information on tapes and to see the new Galaxy range, please contact your ITC representative or visit

[www.itcnaturalluxuryflooring.com](http://www.itcnaturalluxuryflooring.com)

T: 01622 534041

ITC

NATURAL LUXURY FLOORING Ltd

## HOW IMPORTANT IS SOUND IN THE CLASSROOM?

Since children have returned to the school environment, many academic professionals have reflected their concerns over the impact that lockdown had on learning.

In fact, a survey by Young Minds revealed that almost three-quarters of teachers feel students' mental health has been affected.

Communication is key to a smooth and positive transition back to the classroom. In this article, Heckmondwike explore how important sound is in the classroom, to ensure this happens.

### Classroom Communication

While children benefit enormously from flexibility and comfort, they also need strong acoustics. This partly

came down to classroom design – for example, 30% of students learn less if they are sat in the back row. Sound absorption eliminates distractions and gives children the chance to immerse themselves in their environment. According to a Euronoise study, bad classroom acoustics can lead to ill health, vocal disorders or hearing damage in teachers, and concentration and behavioural issues in students.



### Acoustics and Additional Needs

Myriad studies suggest that children with additional needs may benefit from better acoustics. For example, children with autism may be prone to anxiety when there are too many audible distractions. Softer surfaces help to absorb this sound, while designated 'quiet areas' with different carpet designs may help with individual learning.

In particular, sirens, whistles, bells, alarms and machinery can cause "sensory overload" for these children. This can affect their behaviour and inhibit their learning. Many traditional classrooms have considerations for disabilities such as wheelchair ramps but overlook the importance of acoustics.

### A Sound Decision

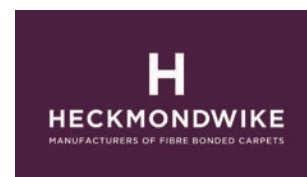
Flooring of a high standard can help to prevent "reverberation time", which is a measure of the time it takes for volume to drop to 60dB after the noise has been made.

Traditional classrooms with high ceilings and hard surfaces tend to bounce sound around, which can be distracting for students and can affect their ability to hear their teacher. Quite simply, if students cannot hear, they cannot learn.

By installing an absorbent carpet like Heckmondwike's Supacord range, schools can naturally eliminate loud noise. Tested to BS EN ISO 140-8, Supacord delivers a 19dB reduction in impact noise across both sheet and

tile ranges. Further to this, the range is available with acoustic backing, which delivers a 22dB reduction. Heckmondwike FB is one of the UK's leading commercial carpet manufacturers with over 40 years' experience in the education sector.

**To learn more, or request a free carpet sample, please contact Heckmondwike on 01924 406 161 or email [sales@heckmondwike-fb.co.uk](mailto:sales@heckmondwike-fb.co.uk).**





## ETERNITY – THE NEXT GENERATION CARPETS



Take a moment to imagine and indulge in the light, delicate touch of blossoming spring blooms. The luxurious Eternity collection presents an ode to the new beginnings of nature, carpets so beautifully soft you'll want them to last forever.

And thanks to the sustainable 100% solution dyed IMPREL® Finesse fibres that promise a lifetime of stain-resistance as well as protection from sunlight, you can enjoy Eternity for years to come, confident in your carpet's easy maintenance and long-lasting beauty.

From bold and confident blooms to delicate, blossoming buds, Eternity styles are inspired by some of our most treasured and familiar flowers, capturing flora's rich tapestry of colour to match any interior look.

The range features several open Saxony structures to give the best in comfort. No matter what your style, Eternity will bring a relaxing taste of nature to your home.

### Amaryllis

If you want to bathe your home in the most exquisite quality that Eternity offers, then Amaryllis is your choice.

This saxony style's deep and dense pile envelopes you in a feeling of blissful luxury and surrounds you in a palette of bright and warm silk tones.

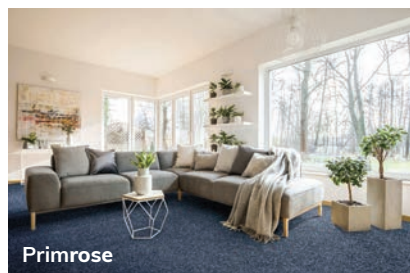


Amaryllis

### Primrose

Offering an open Saxony pile for an impressively comfortable underfoot feel, Primrose brings the wonder of Eternity in a quality that's undeniably versatile.

With a ranging palette of rich colours including ocean blue and deep heather purple, Primrose is a stylish choice in any home.



Primrose

### Lily

Making the sophistication and elegance of Eternity accessible in almost any home, Lily is the collection's most versatile quality. Sharing Primrose's modern palette of confident hues, Lily's saxony structure makes an excellent choice for homes seeking the ultimate blend of luxury and affordability.



Lily

No matter what Eternity carpet you decide upon, each quality comes with a lifetime warranty against everyday household stains and the promise that it will wear as you'd hope for at least 20 years. Balta make every carpet to give you definitive luxury and to meet the very highest quality standards. All Eternity carpets are certified by TUV as suitable for allergy sufferers and by GUT for their emissions and safety.

For more information contact your local Balta representative or the sales office on 0800 898282 or email [sales-UK@baltagroup.com](mailto:sales-UK@baltagroup.com)



## TOP SELLING NATURAL SHADES UPDATE

Manx Tomkinson's best-selling luxury wool loop, Natural Shades, has been updated for summer. With new improved fleece backing, moth resistance, 3 ply 50% wool 50% polypropylene composition and now in 22 contemporary shades.

The range features 14 plain shades, 4 pinstripes and 4 brand new striking multi-stripe options.



Natural Shade - Multi Stripe Lava



Puerto Rico

## THE PUERTO RICO FAMILY

Puerto Rico is a fantastic 2ply, easi-care Polypropylene twist from Manx Tomkinson. It comes with Fleece backing and in sixteen on-trend colourways, incorporating plain and heather tones. Puerto Rico is now available in three weight options, making it ideal for all areas of the home.

- Junior is 1,110 gsm
- Regular is 1,385 gsm
- Deluxe is 1,650 gsm

One range, 16 colours, three weights!  
The perfect balance for today's living.

Sampling is available from your local Area Sales Manager or contact the Manx Tomkinson sales office on 01827 831450 for more details.

## BMK INTRODUCE CHENE RUSTIC GLAZE TO THEIR BEST-SELLING RANGE OF ENGINEERED WOOD AND LVT

Hard flooring experts BMK Flooring are introducing the fabulous new 'Chene Rustic Glaze' range to their market leading Chene Engineered flooring range.

This is one range with two contrasting styles. The Rustic Collection has a distressed/antique finish, whereas the Glaze Collection has a chic/modern finish – offering something for every taste all in one place!

The Rustic is full of natural beauty – the look of the wood is enhanced by manually hand-finishing all of the knots and cracks, piece by piece. The wired brushed finishing emphasises the knots – giving the planks a remarkable 3D effect.



Kensington Rustic



Westminster Rustic



Shoreditch Glaze

The Glaze range contains four shades of grey which perfectly fit with contemporary tastes – giving chic, modern, market leading designs. The special Glaze technology emphasises the natural wood grains while the prime grade effect gives an elegant natural and modern beauty.

All of BMK's pre-finished floors are produced to the highest quality standards.

For more information, contact BMK Flooring on 0113 380 5333 or email [sales@bmkcarpets.co.uk](mailto:sales@bmkcarpets.co.uk)





# A subtle reimagining of the classic Anatolia collection



Anatolia Medallion Aswan

**ulster**<sup>™</sup>  
www.ulstercarpets.com



## AXFELT AND ULSTER - THE PERFECT PARTNERS

Ulster Carpets have underlined the advantages of combining their woven carpet with Axfelt Triple Layer Underlay by announcing an extended guarantee. Any customer choosing Axfelt underlay to complement their Ulster carpet will qualify for an extended guarantee of up to 10 years.

This is an additional four years from their 6-year guarantee for an Ulster carpet. Manufactured at Ulster's Devon factory from 100% recycled materials, Axfelt meets the growing consumer demand for sustainable products.

Helping to prevent wear and tear as well as increasing the lifespan of a carpet, Axfelt underlay provides a perfect foundation to any flooring project.

These long-term benefits are further enhanced when Axfelt is installed with an Ulster carpet. The combination of felt and woven carpet creates a velcro effect that helps to secure the carpet in place and reduces the likelihood of movement over time.

Ulster's Sales Executives will be in touch with retailers to discuss the guarantee in more detail over the coming months.



Anatolia - Medallion Souk



Watercolours - Amulet Ocean

**What's new at Ulster Carpets?** In addition to the Axfelt extended guarantee for woven carpets, Ulster have continued to expand their range, with new additions to Watercolours and Anatolia and the launch of a brand new collection called Natura.

### WATERCOLOURS

The expressive colourisation of artist JMW Turner continues to be the influence behind the five additions to the popular Watercolours range.

Inspired by natural landscapes of the earth, sea and sky combined with the abstract masterpieces of JMW Turner, this Axminster range mimics washes of watercolour pigment softly blending into paper.

New colourways Celeste and Savannah are available in both the Amulet and Mineral design options. The Mineral range also includes Zenith and Azores while Ocean is exclusively found in the Amulet design.

### ANATOLIA

The three new additions to the Anatolia collection will enhance the enduring popularity of this range and ensure it will remain relevant for this decade and beyond.

The classic Persian interlacing medallion design has been retained but Ulster have now added three new colourways to include the greys, blues and neutrals found in modern interiors.

The three new colourways are Aswan, Souk and Bedouin and they are all themed around our aspirations of travelling and experiencing other cultures. Perfect as wall-to-wall carpet or as a flowing stair runner, Anatolia is available in 13 different colourways across three different designs.

### NATURA

Natura, the latest addition to Ulster's extensive offering, taps into the trends for biophilic design. Grounded on a theme that accentuates how we are connected to the intricacy of nature,

the Natura collection is infused with both harmony and balance. The new designs magnify the beauty of nature and this carefully curated collection finds a perfect balance between impactful aesthetics and subtle beauty.

Manufactured from 80% wool and 20% nylon, and suitable for both Heavy Domestic and Heavy Contract applications, Natura encompasses 7 new designs in 24 different colourways. This collection is available in 4m width with a maximum vertical repeat of 1m.

Both Anatolia and Watercolours are also 80% wool and 20% nylon, and are suitable for extra heavy wear applications. Both these ranges are also available in 5 colour-matching Multi Widths.

**For more information contact your local representative or contact the Ulster sales office on**

**028 3833 3177**  
**[www.ulstercarpets.com](http://www.ulstercarpets.com)**



## ELEGANCE, BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!

Over the past few years Furlong Flooring has been overhauling their brand, bringing all their flooring brands together under one roof. This one-stop-shop flooring manufacturer and distributor now offers a complete portfolio of flooring products covering everything from carpet to wood, laminate to LVT and also vinyl. First choice flooring for every room!

“Consumers expect quality and perfection, whatever price they pay. We will not launch a product unless we are confident that it will exceed its intended purpose. Our retail customers have fought hard for their reputations and we simply will not knowingly jeopardise this”,

says Mike Symonds,  
Furlong Flooring director



Elegance - Magna Carta

In April, Furlong Flooring re-launched their signature carpet range, Elegance. With its natural wool look combined with the practical benefits of stain and moth resistance, it's the perfect choice for customers who desire a sophisticated and elegant carpet, which is affordable and hard-wearing.

Re-introduced to the market with significantly enhanced features, it now comes at 180,000 tufts per square metre, an increase of more than 20,000, is 3oz heavier than its predecessor and offers a more pinpoint and refined finish as well as enhanced performance.

In 2019 Furlong Flooring introduced their Combi-bac specially designed backing that has 6 times the yield of normal secondary backing but with a much more flexible nature. Furlong understands the importance of easy, hassle free fitting and the introduction of Combi-bac reduces the chances of scuffing, minimalizes the likelihood of creasing during transit and has a lower risk of the carpet separating from its backing.

Of course, Furlong's signature range also comes with their award-winning Combi-bac backing and their industry leading 10-year warranty, protecting against all stains except gloss paint.

The re-launch of Elegance completes Furlong Flooring's overhaul of their twist collection, which now features something for everyone, at every price point.

The collection includes four new ranges, Revelation, Carefree Twist, Carefree Ultra and Serenity, which sit alongside the already hugely popular Elegance, Trident and Chiltern collections.

For more information contact Furlong Flooring on 01322 628707 or visit [www.furlongflooring.com](http://www.furlongflooring.com)



**Furlong Flooring**

First choice flooring for every room

## TELENZO CARPETS - STYLE AND QUALITY ASSURED NATURALLY

Telenzo Carpets are renowned for producing quality wool loop carpets and due to the great success with the ranges, Kings Cross/London Bridge & Paddington they have relaunched them with additional colours for a bigger and better offer.

All made with 100% wool in a 3ply yarn and with Scotchgard protection they have their own individual look and style.



London Bridge

Telenzo have invested in these ranges by adding more colours to meet today's trends and lifestyle which means they all come with the 10 same shades in each design giving the consumer the choice but all at one very competitive price point.

All qualities are being launched now so please contact your Telenzo sales agent if you require more details or information.

For more information contact Telenzo on 01827 8314987 or [sales@telenzo.co.uk](mailto:sales@telenzo.co.uk)

**TELENZO**  
CARPETS since 1918

## CAVALIER CARPETS - READY TO SPRING BACK INTO ACTION!

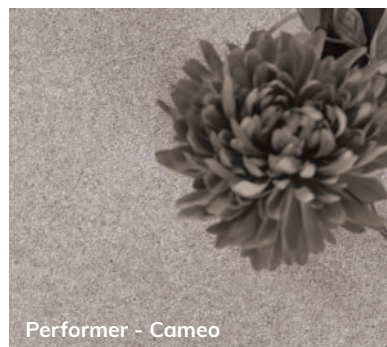
Hans Lowe, sales director of Cavalier Carpets, pictured with two new arrivals on the family farm, is symbolic of Cavalier Carpets' attitude to getting back to business with a sense of 'new beginnings'.

The fact is, Cavalier Carpets have never stopped; although they have, at times, had some staff furloughed and others working from home, they have always maintained forward momentum.

Cavalier Carpets have been very busy enhancing current ranges with exciting new colour palettes and developing brand new products.

The Cavalier Carpets' Sales Representatives hit the ground running, with lots of new sampling to update the Cavalier collection already out in the marketplace.

Naturally Cavalier ensure that their representatives stick to their strict Covid protocols, including fixed appointment times, wearing of PPE, avoiding contact with your customers and politely refusing a cuppa, when offered!



Performer - Cameo



Stain-Less Luxury



Country Collection



Pennine

UPDATES ARE OUT NOW FOR THESE BEST-SELLING RANGES, SO LOOK OUT FOR THEM;

- NEW colours for Cartouche
- NEW Downtown Loop
- NEW colours for Pennine Heathers
- NEW Stain-less Luxury
- NEW Performer Twist
- NEW Colours for Collection Colours

For more information, contact Cavalier Carpets on 01254 268053 or [sales@cavalier-carpets.co.uk](mailto:sales@cavalier-carpets.co.uk)

**Cavalier**  
CARPETS



**IN A REGULAR FEATURE RICHARD RENOUF HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANT BUSINESS ISSUES TO HELP MEMBERS STAY UP TO DATE!**

**Richard has worked in floorcoverings and furniture retail for more than thirty years. His experience includes independent family businesses and a major national retail chain. In 1992 Richard established the Qualitas Conciliation Service (now the Furniture Ombudsman) to help resolve disputes about furniture and floorcoverings and is now working as an independent consultant and is a consultant member of the Contract Flooring Association.**



The flooring had been installed perfectly. Everywhere I checked the expansion gaps they were the full 12 mm. The door frames had been undercut so there was room for expansion there. The floor was flat. The joints were aligned in a perfect brick bond. And yet the joints were lifting and breaking, the raised edges were chipping and the flooring looked a mess.

I admired the fish tank. Two huge parrot fish and a selection of red-tailed sharks, tiger barbs and catfish swam in crystal-clear water that put my own meagre efforts at fish-keeping to shame. I chatted to the owner and he told me about his hobby.

He'd bought the aquarium just after the flooring had been put in, but had kept fish for many years before this. Some of the fish he had raised from fry and his ever-growing collection had made him buy a bigger one than his last, 240 litres instead of 120, and he'd like an even bigger one.

I did a quick mental calculation. One litre of water weighs a kilo. Add to that the water in the filter system which was housed in the cupboards below, and the weight of the cupboards themselves and we were looking at a quarter of a tonne.

He might as well have nailed the flooring to the floor, it wasn't going to 'float' with that weight on it.

So who is liable for that? If the tank had been in the room when the retailer had measured up, it ought not have been taken into account.



If the retailer sold the flooring knowing that such a weight was going onto it, it would be the retailer's responsibility to ensure the flooring was fit for purpose – specifically for that purpose, not just for use as flooring.

**“ We can't predict everything a customer might do...”**

If the tank hadn't been present the customer would almost certainly still blame the retailer for not telling him of the consequences of installing the aquarium if the retailer tried to deny responsibility.

We can't predict everything a customer might do, but simple things such as leaving a set of the installation and care instructions for the flooring we've just laid would help us deal with the unexpected.

**Richard Renouf**



# Furlong Flooring

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flooring  
solutions  
under one roof



**FIRST CHOICE FLOORING FOR EVERY ROOM**

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Contact sales: Darford 01322 628 700 • Preston 01772 316155 • Stonehouse 0845 520 0800



## CARPET RECYCLING UK AT THE FLOORING SHOW 2021

Carpet Recycling UK (CRUK), which will be exhibiting at The Flooring Show 2021 in September, says it is seeing emerging trends on the repurposing of carpet and textile flooring waste as a resource in all types of refurbishment projects.

The independent non-profit membership association works with companies across the flooring sector and wider industries to develop viable solutions for carpet, carpet tiles and other textile flooring waste. Visitors to the Harrogate show on September 19th to 21st will find the CRUK team on their new stand in Hall A (A45) next to their long-standing core funder member Cormar Carpets.

Commenting on several emerging trends, Adnan Zeb-Khan, CRUK

Manager welcomes the shift towards better 'outcomes' for unwanted carpet, carpet tile and textile flooring that is increasingly being moved up the waste hierarchy – one of their key aims.

The flooring trade has continued to remain busy and CRUK has seen a surge in enquiries from a new sector, the fit out/demolition contractors stripping out textile flooring such as carpet tiles from offices and quality broadloom from hotels. Built With: Workplace Experts has become CRUK's first fit out member.

Adnan states: "Fit out companies are contacting us because their customers - developers and designers – want to embrace sustainability and repurpose materials where possible. They are

requesting that projects incorporate sustainable flooring, which can include repurposed commercial carpet tiles, as well as specifying products made with recycled content or designed with take back and recycling in mind."

He continues: "Flooring contractors see the value in working with us, using our branding to demonstrate their Green Credentials to customers to show that carpet is being repurposed, whether for reuse or recycling." Examples include Contract Flooring Solutions, Designer Contracts and new homes flooring contractor Saint Flooring, whose MD David Heafey can testify to the value of CRUK membership.



David, who incentivises his team with a bonus for segregating PP tufted offcuts for recycling, says:

“Across the group, we’re saving around £150,000 to £170,000 annually on skips and waste costs by recycling carpet, as well as underlay, cardboard and polythene. CRUK supported us throughout and our membership helped us to find partners to recycle the carpet. Without being a member, I do not think we would have had this success. Membership has been worth its weight in gold!”

At the Flooring Show, CRUK plans to showcase some of the products from the non-woven recyclers who are working with some of their key flooring contractor members. These are Anglo Recycling, Edward Clay & Son and John Cotton Group.

Underlay manufacturers, including CRUK member Interfloor Ltd (in Hall B, B22), are also keen to demonstrate the recycled content in their products and interest is building in this sector.

CRUK’s Membership Services Manager, Marie Rhodes says: “Many of these manufacturers use recycled PU foam in their products and realise that it’s beneficial to align with our network, branding platform and large outreach.”

Repurposing of carpet materials is particularly welcome and CRUK member Bradford-based Melrose Interiors is setting a great example by turning unwanted post-manufacture broadloom carpets into rugs.

Marie adds: “We aim to try to push carpet up the waste hierarchy for repurposing and reuse where

possible, saving costs and helping to save resources. Ultimately, it is so rewarding to see these quality materials being repurposed across all sectors, including the commercial and third sectors, where they do so much good in the community.

“We’re looking forward to meeting visitors at the show to discuss options and share advice on how companies can divert more carpet and textile flooring materials from landfill.”

CRUK is supported by its core funder members – Balsan, Betap, Brintons Carpets, Cormar Carpets, DESSO, ege Carpets, Lifestyle Floors/Headlam, Milliken and new member Shaw.

For more information, email: [info@carpetrecyclinguk.com](mailto:info@carpetrecyclinguk.com) or visit [www.carpetrecyclinguk.com](http://www.carpetrecyclinguk.com)

## CARPET RECYCLING UK

recovering carpet value



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Image courtesy of Ted Todd



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# at the SHARP END

Each issue SMG puts ten questions to professionals in the furnishing industry to hear their Thoughts from 'the sharp end'.



James Camilleri is the sales representative for Victoria Carpets & Design Floors, covering Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Northants and Leicestershire. James has been in the flooring trade for over 20 years starting off in retail with Cosy Carpets in Thetford, where he worked for nine years. After gaining retail experience, he moved over to 'life on the road' working as Area Sales Manager for Headlam and now with Victoria, where he has been for the last 15 months.

## HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE TRADE?

I was working on a trade counter in a painting and decorating centre. The two owners of Cosy Carpets in Thetford were opening a new shop. While they were painting and getting it ready, they offered me a job. I wanted to be trained as a fitter but on the first day at the grand opening, I sold the most amount of carpet with very little knowledge. From there on I was hooked on selling. I worked my way up to Manager of that store.

## WHAT HAVE YOU SEEN CHANGE MOST IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS?

The main thing is social media. It's a great way to promote your business, gather interest and get sales. Because we work in such a visually dominated industry, people look for inspiration and social media is the perfect way for businesses not only to show the products they stock, but also show off their workmanship too.

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PRODUCT THAT SELLS THE MOST IN YOUR AREA?

This one is tricky, as all our ranges are great and sell well. EasiCare First Impressions is a great seller. But then so is our new Luxuria Velvet. This really is a special carpet. It's a 6.6 nylon construction and is so unbelievably soft. The colours are great too, lots of really rich shades to match any of today's interior trends. It also has a 20 year wear warranty too – our most hard wearing carpet!

**VICTORIA**<sup>™</sup>  
Carpets & Design Floors

## WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE AS AN AREA SALES MANAGER?

My biggest challenge is getting retailers to take in new stands and get shop floor space. It's such a competitive market. Most shops have very little space left to give, so you have to promote the USP's of your ranges. It helps that our portfolio is really strong as at the moment. We have some amazing new products coming through that really are a cut above others in the market.

## OF ALL THE RETAILERS YOU VISIT, WHAT COMMON DENOMINATOR CONTRIBUTES TO THEM BEING SUCCESSFUL?

I actually think it's a mixture of knowledge, honesty, and communication.

All the best retailers I deal with that are successful have great product knowledge and understand which products to put in the correct areas. They also understand that clear communication is vital. Good or bad. Whether that is to the end user or myself. A relationship is built on trust, and that starts and ends with good communication.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES FOR RETAILERS IN THE MARKET PLACE AT THE MOMENT?

The main challenges seem to be time. They are so busy; in some cases, they don't have availability for months. They are having to turn people away or are losing jobs when homeowners aren't willing to wait. Many are going appointment based only to help the risk from covid which although necessary, will be very time consuming. At Victoria we have an online portal – U2V, which allows our retailers to place orders 24/7 – as a business we try really hard to

help take the pressures off the shops where we can. It's the same with getting hold of materials; If they can fit small jobs in, they will, but stock levels across the board are harder to get hold of due to how busy everybody is. Luckily, the stocks at Victoria are pretty consistent!

## IF YOU COULD ASK RETAILERS TO CHANGE ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would want every retailer I have to give me more shop floor space to show all our ranges & be the main supplier for them. We have some great product and amazing point of sale options so of course I want to see them in every store! I think every rep would want that.

## IF YOU DIDN'T WORK IN THE INDUSTRY, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING NOW?

Honestly, I haven't really thought about it. I would love to be a professional golfer but sadly I'm not talented enough. I would say I would love to be in sales in some form or another. I'm a sales driven person. I couldn't see myself sitting in an office. It just wouldn't suit me. I like to be out and about, travelling to different places and meeting people.

## WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE EVER BEEN GIVEN?

Don't lie. When I was in retail, I was given this advice. You may be able to get away with lying to a customer once or twice, or maybe for months, but sooner or later it will come back to haunt you. If there's a problem or you've done something wrong own up to it.

Victoria Carpets Limited was founded in 1895 by George Anton and his two partners in Victoria Road, Kirkcaldy, Scotland. In 1900 the business moved to Kidderminster which was developing as the centre of the carpet weaving industry. The business continued to grow and in 2013, Victoria Carpets was granted the Royal Warrant to Her Majesty the Queen. The Victoria Carpets business now partners with Distinctive Flooring and has become Victoria Carpets & Design Floors – offering retailers both quality carpet and LVT from a UK leading manufacturer.



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## WOOL, AN INNER SPACE EXPERIENCE!

FROM MARTIN CURTIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE WOOL CARPET FOCUS GROUP



**“If an alien from outer space decided to check out the Earth as a proposed new planet for settlement, I think their observations over the past year or so would put them off!**



Calét Curtis (6)

We have had the debacle of the Brexit negotiations; Covid-19 Pandemic; the lousiest autumn and winter for years; springtime for the ducks and Eskimos and now we are heading for a drought!

Unrest is apparent almost everywhere you look and yet in some countries we are expecting rapid economic growth. It is not surprising that we are getting a little fed up but there are still a few things to be happy about and grateful for.

Yes, you guessed it, Wool is one of them!

I have been asked to write a couple of articles about wool and I find that when I start and have done some research I learn something new. I recently wrote about Sick Building Syndrome and I found out that not only is it not a joke but it is actually quite serious.

Having to stay pretty much indoors for several months (especially in winter when it's cold and the doors and windows are shut) I discovered that the toxins in the air we breathe can be very harmful to us. It can cause fatigue, sickness, headaches and more. Much research has been done on the topic and toxins are apparently released from items such as plastic windows and doors, other similar materials and even wood floors and furniture. These toxins can affect people quite badly and although not wanting to scare monger it is only fair to give you the information in order that you can be aware of the issue.

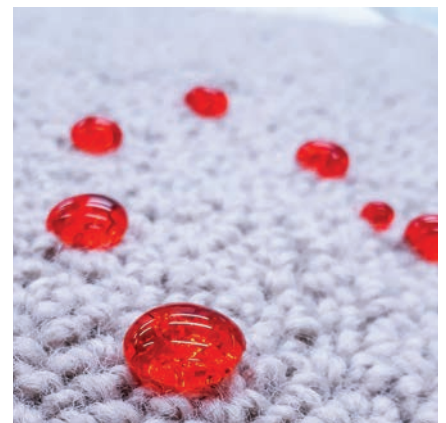
You will be pleasantly surprised to hear that there are several ways to combat the problem; first, open doors and windows and let fresh air into the house, hotel room or office etc. Not always popular in winter of course.

The other somewhat surprising thing you can do is to have wool carpets and furniture! Yes, quite remarkably, wool carpets absorb toxins from the air we breathe and lock it in to the fibre never to be released. “What the heck?” I can hear you say! Well, it is true and many studies have proved it (just ask Dr. Mike Madden of ENCO, Environmental Consultants) so if you have wool carpets you are helping to keep yourself and your family healthier.

Wool has other excellent properties as well. It is flame resistant - it needs more oxygen than exists in the air we breathe to maintain a flame. It sings and will burn in a raging fire but the fire department will prefer to fight a house fire filled with wool rather than with plastics like nylon or polyester or polypropylene! Burn

plastic and you have molten hot globules and dense acrid black smoke. That doesn't happen with wool.

Wool is also nice to walk on, sleep on or wrap yourself up in. Polyester (synthetic) clothes tend to be sweaty and smelly, wool isn't. Wool breathes and doesn't attract dirt! When you do need to wash or clean it, it isn't as often and it also cleans better (ask Steve Bakker of the Woolsafe organisation). I actually own a baselayer garment in wool and I simply air it overnight and it doesn't need a wash. When I do wash it - it is in the machine and it can also be machine dried! I sell them - reminds me of the Remington Razor advert, “I liked it so much I bought the company” - well not quite but I like it an awful lot!



THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL  
PATRON: HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES



Whilst we have been shut indoors with lockdown we have had time to think about things. I know I have and the environment both inside and outside the home has been on my agenda and a lot of other people's too. If you have read any of my previous articles you know that Wool is sustainable. Wool has so many good properties it not only makes sense to know about them but it is important that retailers selling carpets let their customers know about them also.

It is interesting that supermarkets have found that people have changed their buying habits somewhat. Cheap and poorer quality ready-made meals, for example, have dropped in sales and fresh meat and fish and vegetables have increased. Perhaps with a little more time on their hands consumers are prepared to make healthier choices? We all know what is good for us, but sometimes we need a reminder or a quick nudge. That is why, in my opinion, carpet retailers should be happy to let their customers know that Wool is often the wisest choice - for many reasons.

Perhaps that spaceship could find a good place to land in a field of free-range sheep who would give them a friendly welcome? I also bet, being cooped up in a spaceship for long periods, they would want to kit it out with wool carpets, curtains and bedding - what better way to furnish your inner space?"

[woolcarpetsnaturally.org](http://woolcarpetsnaturally.org)

**Wool Carpets #Naturally**





## MAKING SPACES INTO PLACES WITH FORBO

FORBO FLOORING SYSTEMS IS ONE OF THE UK'S LEADING FLOORING MANUFACTURERS, OFFERING A WIDE PORTFOLIO OF SOLUTIONS TO HELP CREATE FUNCTIONAL AND STYLISH INTERIORS.

PASSIONATE ABOUT FLOORING, FORBO BELIEVES THAT FLOOR COVERINGS CAN PROVIDE AN INSPIRATIONAL BASIS FOR ANY INTERIOR DESIGN AND AS SUCH, IS CONTINUALLY LOOKING TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE ITS PORTFOLIO IN ORDER TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF ITS CUSTOMERS. IN FACT, FORBO PRIDES ITSELF ON OFFERING A TRULY COMPREHENSIVE PRODUCT PORTFOLIO, WHICH CONSISTS OF LEADING-EDGE PRODUCTS – INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

### Enduro

Enduro is Forbo's Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT) collection, which has been designed to create beautiful home interiors. With over 20 designs available, the collection combines the striking looks of wood and concrete with the durability and maintenance of vinyl. Each plank and tile have a unique natural matt embossing, which helps to create that beautiful and authentic aesthetic. Enduro is also available in both the fully adhered dryback and adhesive free click constructions for flexible installations.



Washed Oak



Anthracite Timber



White Oak



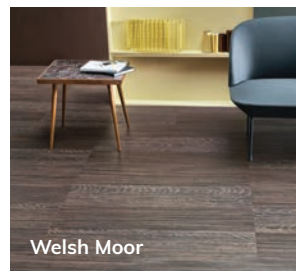
Light Concrete

### Marmoleum Modular

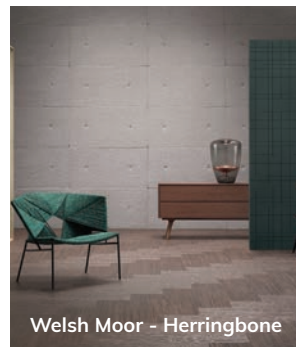
Forbo's Marmoleum is one of the most sustainable floor coverings available on the market, thanks to it being manufactured with 88% natural raw materials. The Marmoleum Modular collection consists of over 50 colours and designs, including stone, wood, marble and concrete aesthetics, which are all available in three tile sizes: 50 x 50 cm, 50 x 25 cm and 100 x 25 cm. The modular format of the collection allows you and your customers to play, connect and combine various tiles to create unique designs.



Cloudy Sand - Mercury - Neptune



Welsh Moor



Welsh Moor - Herringbone



Satellite - Delta Lace

**Flotex**

Flotex is Forbo's very own unique floor covering, offering the best of both worlds, as it delivers the durability of a resilient combined with all the warmth and comfort of a carpet. It's 100% waterproof, meaning that everyday splashes and spills can be cleaned up quickly and easily, and it's also the only textile floor covering to be awarded the prestigious Allergy UK Seal of Approval. And if that's not all, Flotex is available in an array of contemporary colours and designs.



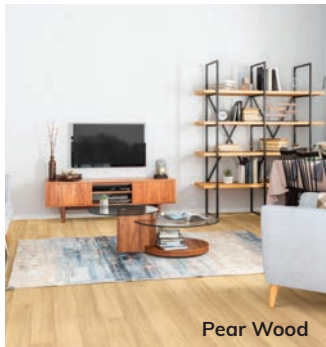
Charcoal Glaze



European White



Calgary Cement



Pear Wood



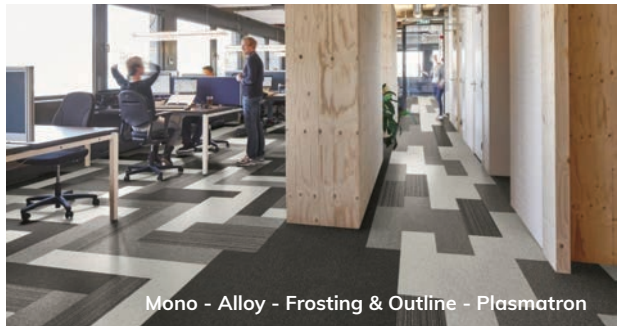
Lava Stone

**Tessera Teviot**

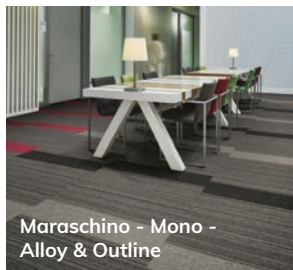
Tessera Teviot is Forbo's most popular low loop pile carpet tile and is without a doubt one of the best-selling carpet tiles in the UK. Manufactured from 100% Aquafil polyamide, and boasting a high castor chair rating, it has the resilience and durability needed to contend with heavy traffic conditions often found in office environments. It is also available in wide variety of colours, including subtle neutrals, contemporary grey shades, as well as a mixture of bright colour pops, such as Raspberry, Mandarin and Skyblue.

**Tessera Layout & Outline**

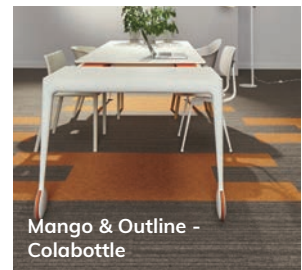
Featuring a contemporary palette of 32 colours with eight co-ordinated stripes, Forbo's Tessera Layout & Outline carpet tile collection provides you and your customers with numerous possibilities for creating an inspirational flooring scheme. The dynamic colour palette of Layout features a comprehensive choice of modern neutrals alongside brighter shades, which can be used independently or combined to achieve a variety of interior styles. Whereas Outline is a subtly textured striped loop pile carpet tile, with each colourway perfectly matching two Layout colours. Tessera Layout & Outline are both available in 50 x 50 cm tiles and 100 x 25 cm planks.



Mono - Alloy - Frosting & Outline - Plasmatron



Maraschino - Mono - Alloy & Outline



Mango & Outline - Colabottle

For more information about Forbo and its products, visit [www.forbo-flooring.co.uk](http://www.forbo-flooring.co.uk) or to order FREE samples of the products mentioned above, call 0800 731 2369.



FLOORING SYSTEMS



Light Grey - Dark Grey - Sage High





“

We have become a one stop shop for all styles and quality with a service to match...”



# QUESTION TIME

## Keith Morgan – Sales Director at Hugh Mackay Group

*In this issue of Question Time, SMG were lucky enough to interview Keith Morgan, Sales Director of the Hugh Mackay Group. A very busy man, we feel extremely fortunate that he has agreed to take part in our Question Time feature. Keith started out on the retail side of the business with his own shops (Hightown Carpets) in Middlewich and Sandbach, where he started as manager in 1983 and then became proprietor before moving on in 1991. In 1991 he became a Store manager for Allied Carpets and was promoted to Regional Base Manager by 1996. After this he joined Carpetright where he became Divisional Controller before joining Charles Coombes at SCS to introduce flooring into their stores across the whole of the UK. In 2017 he moved on from SCS to join forces with his old friend Vince Holden and the team at Hugh Mackay (formerly Whitestone Weavers), becoming Sales Director in 2019. With this wealth of knowledge from both sides of the flooring industry, he is ideally placed to answer our usual questions....*

### How would you describe the values that have made Hugh Mackay so successful?

‘The Values we hold to will always remain the same. Our mantra is supplying the best quality service using the best products available and finishing the journey with excellent after sales service. Since Vince and I joined the team, we are both passionate about delivering a service that recognises the problems retailers face day to day, recognising that as a supplier and dealing with issues with an empathy to the problems the retailers deal with is core to the values Hugh Mackay hold’

### What are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?

‘We all as manufacturers and suppliers have some major challenges currently, many or all are down to the current pandemic situation. I am sure you will all be aware of the spiralling costs we all have to endure currently from Yarns and distribution across the UK and Europe. We are doing our utmost to control this and absorb as much as we can and will continue to do so. Stock control during this challenging time has brought its own problems however we have been fortunate that our stock controllers have done an amazing job in keeping us full to the rafters with the best sellers. It’s great to think whilst I write this that we have managed to maintain a degree of normality in terms of our service in what has been the strangest of times’

### Independent Retailers are also facing challenges, what advice would you offer them?

‘I have the utmost respect for the independent retailers, being one myself for many years I take my hat off to you all in the positive way you have managed this difficult trading time. My advice is for the Independent retailer to continue to do what they always do best by giving the customer that special one on one

treatment they don’t get anywhere else. At the moment we all need to feel special; this is what independent retail does so well with their customers. A friendly face in challenging times will close a sale every time.

### If you could ask retailers to change one thing, what would it be?

‘Throw everything else out and have a Hugh Mackay Showroom... but seriously there isn’t a product base we don’t cover and whilst we are known for our beautiful wools, the launch of Qfloors this year is a game changer. This exciting range will be introduced to you via your Pure Range and will be instrumental in the growth we have as a proud supplier to SMG. So, the one thing I would love the retailer to change could be the perception of Hugh Mackay. We have become a one stop shop for all styles and quality with a service to match’



### How would you like to see the industry change in the future?

‘This year has seen many changes to our industry, some none of us anticipated and some very challenging to manage. It has always fascinated me as a retailer for many years and now as a supplier, that a customer is happy to wait to have a quality piece of furniture delivered, or wait maybe 16 weeks for a kitchen, but will be positively put out at the very thought of having to wait 5 whole days for a beautiful carpet to finish off the purchase. I do say this slightly ‘tongue in cheek’ but if there is one thing, I would love to see change in our industry, it is the demand customers put on the retailers for next day delivery when a reasonable lead time is accepted in every other sector. I have just experienced this myself by ordering a simple blind to be installed at home, the lead time for installation is 9 weeks when I’m thinking they can fit it next week ... that’s me falling into my own trap’

### What is your favourite Hugh Mackay product?

‘All of them, our brands cover every style and quality you could want and with the introduction of Qfloors we have opened up a whole new product base to explore. If I was to be specific my favourite ‘go to’ range in our Man-Made offer is the new Knightsbridge, what a collection... 3 qualities over 3 x widths using 20 x colours (yes there are colours) it gives your customer 120 options from one range. We have used a softer yarn meaning the product handles well but sustains its looks and durability, this will be the winner for 2021. My Wool favourite has to be Quintessential Twist. Our 55oz double sheared, soft backed satin twist made with New Zealand wool and melt bond is a masterpiece. With a satin finish and its soft colours this is a carpet that takes the twist pile market to a different level’



**What are your career highlights?**

‘The here and now is my career highlight. I love being able to make a difference and as Sales Director of Hugh Mackay I feel the platform lets me do that. I am super proud to be working with a great team of people with an ethic to match. Hugh Mackay has allowed me to bring my retail experience to the table and help understand a retailer’s perspective on the service we need to give to you. I have had a number of career highlights during my journey, one of the greatest ones was when I opened my first retail shop as an independent retailer myself. I never thought I would get to that moment and I enjoyed 8 fantastic years at the helm of my own shop... what a feeling that was!

**Outside of work, what are your passions?**

‘Cycling is one of my passions, now for those who know me out there I am not the fittest of blokes, but I do enjoy cycling and it gives me the chance to lose myself for a while. I live in Somerset with some beautiful countryside around me, meaning its easy to enjoy from the moment I leave the house. My other passion, apart from my amazing family, is F1. I have always enjoyed the sport and have been fortunate enough to have enjoyed going to the races on a number of occasions with my favourite being going to the Spielberg ring in Austria and watch Max give the Mercedes boys a spanking around the red bull ring. Now is the time I start rambling about F1 so I will leave it here lol’

**In your whole life, what makes you most proud, what is your proudest achievement?**

‘This may sound a bit corny but I make no apologies, my family makes me most proud and seeing what they achieve. Family sometimes gets forgotten in busy times. the way they have managed not seeing each other during this torturous time we are living through and how we have all managed with zoom calls, family quizzes, group chats and the like have made us feel even closer in absence’. Other proud moments would include riding my first push bike at the age of 4 and not falling off, now for those who know me you will know that’s an achievement and enjoying jumping out of an aircraft at 16,000ft doing 90 seconds of free fall for charity was a bit of a moment. I lost my left leg as a child so both the above become slightly more relevant when you know this little ditty of information .

**Do you have any regrets?**

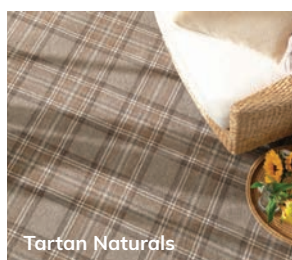
‘I’ve had a few ... but then again too few to mention’

**What’s the best piece of advice you’ve ever been given?**

‘don’t take life too seriously ... that doesn’t mean you don’t take every challenge on with the determination it deserves, it just means you can do it with a different perspective whilst you deal with it. Having fun and achieving a result is not difficult, its all about your outlook on life’



“  
Having fun  
and achieving  
a result is not  
difficult, its  
all about your  
outlook  
on life...”







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## BROCKWAY

The Home of Wool Carpet



## PATTERN POPS UP AROUND THE COUNTRY THANKS TO ABINGDON FLOORING

The launch of Abingdon Flooring's StainFree Wilton is seeing pattern pop up in stores across the country as the collection's stylish lecterns hit the shop floor.

Abingdon Flooring's StainFree Wilton collection comes as a dual set of lecterns that are marking a welcome return to pattern in carpet stores. The British manufacturer is reporting strong up-take for the carpet and is encouraging any retailers contemplating the collection to get in touch.

Head of Marketing Millie Barlow, comments: "We've been delighted that the collection has really caught the imagination of our retailers and we're looking forward to consumers sharing shots of their fab new patterned carpets on social media. It's a carpet that's going to appeal

to homeowners that take their interiors seriously and we're glad that Abingdon Flooring is able to respond to the rising interest in pattern with a great value carpet that's StainFree for life. Given its popularity, we're encouraging any retailers contemplating the collection to get in touch before we sell out of lecterns."



On one lectern, customers will find a range of beautiful floral designs, while on the other reside tartans and checks. All carpets are classic patterns given a new lease of life

with elegant colourways taking right out of the hottest looks. By grouping patterns on two lecterns, Abingdon Flooring is making it easy for anyone to enjoy the uplifting power of pattern.

"While there are many people that feel comfortable in choosing strong patterns for their home interiors, there are probably far more that want a little guidance and reassurance," continues Millie. "The StainFree Wilton collection offers just that – a considered selection of designs with colourways that never feel too daring but that also offer something a little bold should they really discover their adventurous side."

Each style is available four-metre wide and is made from high-quality polypropylene yarn for patterned carpet that's also great value. Enjoying a StainFree for life and 10-year wear warranty, the bleach cleanable Wilton collection is ready to make pattern accessible to more homeowners than ever before.

# ABINGDON FLOORING

## ABINGDON FLOORING BOOSTS SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Abingdon Flooring has launched its trade portal, bringing retail customers access to real-time stock levels, account management, orders and progress tracking.



Featuring real time stock updates and order processing on its Stainfree, Love Story, Royal Wilton, SoftStep and Abingdon Carpet Tile Division brands, British carpet manufacturer, Abingdon Flooring, has launched a trade-only portal for its retailer network. Simplifying account management,

the secure online platform makes the entire customer relationship management procedure easier.

Live stock updates allow consumers to make an informed choice about their carpet or cushion vinyl flooring, allowing retailers to manage availability expectations at the point of sale. A simple to use filter or search field makes it easy to find the right style, with stock levels available on all width options.

Millie Barlow, head of marketing for Abingdon Flooring, says: "Consumers expect to be served information immediately and so it's important that retailers are in a position to manage this. Our portal allows retailers to provide information on expected delivery at the point-of-sale, helping to provide a high level of service that's expected from independent retailers, whether it's a Monday morning or Sunday afternoon."

The portal also allows orders to be placed and progress of orders to be checked, again helping retailers to manage customer relationships throughout the entire buying process. Ensuring that its customers stay closely connected to account management is a key priority for Abingdon Flooring.

"As a British manufacturer, we are in the position to be able to negate some of the problems that can be found in the supply chain of other carpet companies," continues Millie. "However, the efficiency advantages can be lost if retailers are reliant solely on a single order process. It's a business priority to provide a more connected digital offer and our portal streamlines the entire account management process. It provides a further option for ordering, while helping to strengthen the message of great service that stands so many independent retailers in good stead."

For further information, call 01274 655 694, [sales@abingdonflooring.co.uk](mailto:sales@abingdonflooring.co.uk), [www.abingdonflooring.co.uk](http://www.abingdonflooring.co.uk)



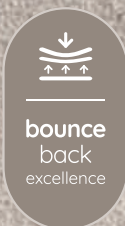
# vivendi®

stressfree carpet for happy people



## Any room. Any life.

Stressfree – bleach cleanable • Incredibly resilient  
Superbly wear-resistant • Pleasantly soft



# Vivendi®

## Stressfree carpet for happy people

Remember those stressful Sunday afternoons at your grandparents? When you were just a child, and any spill on the carpet was a drama? For better childhood memories, there's Vivendi®. Stressfree carpet for happy people.

With a Vivendi® carpet, nothing stops you from enjoying life's best moments. Vivendi® is made with the exclusive iVivo® yarn, a solution dyed nylon of an exceptional quality. It makes Vivendi® carpet bleach cleanable, incredibly resilient, superbly wear-resistant and yet pleasantly soft. With five diverse ranges, there's a carpet to make all people happy: from playful to dense, from discreet pastels to trendy greys and intense colours.

**Stressfree - bleach cleanable**

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**Incredibly resilient**

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**Superbly wear-resistant**

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**Pleasantly soft**

Watch the award winning Vivendi-movie and discover full details: [www.vivendi-carpet.co.uk](http://www.vivendi-carpet.co.uk)

## Ranges



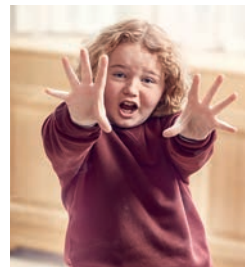
Soul



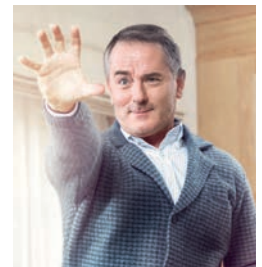
Vibes



Vigour



Ardour



Verve



**A UK brand  
since 1964**





## WOOLSAFE RELEASES APPROVED LIST OF COVID-19 SANITIZERS

THE WOOLSAFE-APPROVED SANITIZERS KILL SARS-COV-2, THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES COVID-19, AND ARE SAFE FOR USE ON CARPET AND OTHER TEXTILES.



As the professional cleaning industry's focus shifted over the past year to sanitizing and disinfecting in order to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2, indoor textiles have been an unintended casualty. The sanitizing and disinfecting products now being used with such regularity are primarily formulated for hard surfaces; however, many of these products have seen blanket use on all indoor surfaces, including carpet, rugs, and upholstery.

These products cause textile issues such as bleaching, colour change, fibre degradation, and rapid soiling. To address this issue, WoolSafe has released a list of approved sanitizers that kill SARS-CoV-2 and are safe for use on carpet and other textiles. The WoolSafe-approved sanitizers can be found in the online WoolSafe Booklet: Support and Guidance for Trading Safely During SARS CoV-2 at [www.woolsafe.org](http://www.woolsafe.org)

WoolSafe Academy has also hosted several infection control courses, supporting members with increased and discounted training and educating hundreds of professional cleaners about the virus and the solutions available. As we see the lifting of restrictions on non-essential retail and hospitality, now is the time to put the correct cleaning procedures in place while selecting the best products for the job.

WoolSafe's goal has been to help keep both the cleaner and customer safe while assisting commercial businesses, retail stores, and hospitality to reopen and operate safely while preserving facilities' investments in their textiles.



- Alltec, ENVIROSAFE Multi Surface Cleaner
- Prochem B125 CLENSAN® and D500 MICROSAN®
- BarrierTech™ Surface Disinfectant
- Benefect Botanical Decon 30 & Botanical Disinfectant Wipes
- Some of Diversey Oxivir range
- GermErase and their products are C19 and S21

Carpet retailers and suppliers wishing to sanitise their in-store carpets or sample books should look for the WoolSafe certification on the products they are using or contact their local WoolSafe Approved Service Provider. [www.woolsafe.org/find-a-carpet-cleaner](http://www.woolsafe.org/find-a-carpet-cleaner)

The WoolSafe Organization is a cleaning industry service provider that promotes best practices in carpet and rug care through product evaluation and certification, education and training, and the promotion of professional cleaning and inspection services. Established in 1991, the WoolSafe Certification Mark represents products as being safe and effective for carpet care based on WoolSafe's testing and standards. Many cleaning chemical suppliers use the certification mark to identify and promote those carpet care products specifically suitable for use on wool.

For more information, visit [www.woolsafe.org](http://www.woolsafe.org) or email us at [office@woolsafe.org](mailto:office@woolsafe.org)



BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED, BEAUTIFULLY STYLED

## WHAT'S NEW

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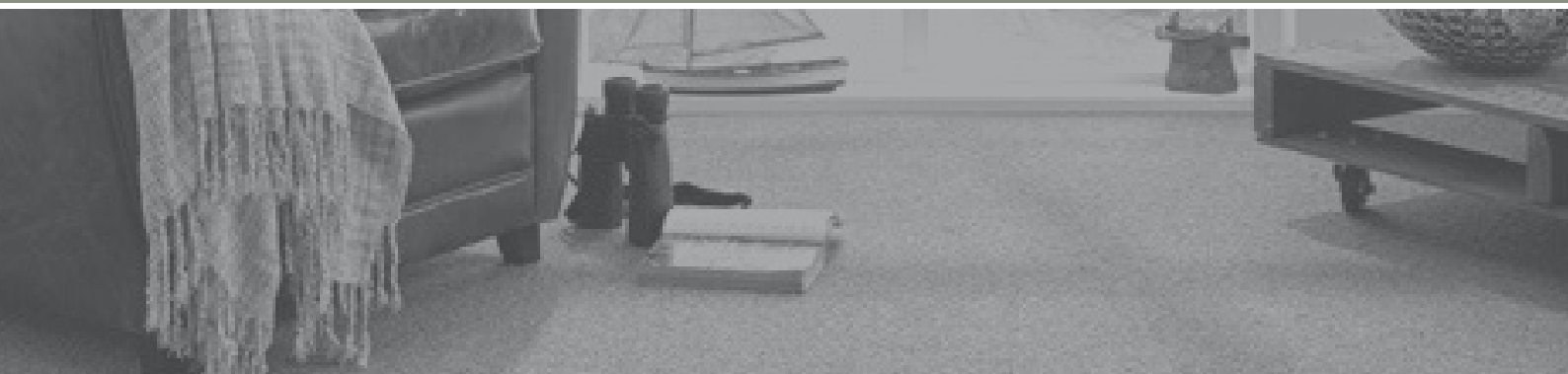
Our new sample folder houses 150 individual SKUs, including new range Marylebone, in a beautifully presented and easy to use carry case. Contact your area sales manager for further details.



## CONTACT US

---

Call us on 01827 831525, email us on [sales@gaskellwoolrich.co.uk](mailto:sales@gaskellwoolrich.co.uk) or visit our website [www.gaskellwoolrich.co.uk](http://www.gaskellwoolrich.co.uk)





# FLOORLINE METAL EDGINGS & ACCESSORIES

BY BALL & YOUNG



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T: **01536 200502**

E: **bysales@ballandyoung.com**

**[www.ballandyoung.com](http://www.ballandyoung.com)**

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1

### BOUNCEBACK

naturally resilient and bounces back into shape time after time resulting in fabulous appearance retention

### WHY WOOL? 5 REASONS

2

### EASY CLEAN

naturally stain resistant and easy to clean

3

### SUSTAINABLE

naturally safe product from a renewable source, the ultimate planet friendly fibre from the original free range animal

5

### BREATHABLE

naturally filters the air whilst regulating humidity, generating a comfortable atmosphere

4

### NON-FLAMMABLE

naturally flame resistant creating an inherently safer carpet

To find out more about Westex wool carpet ranges visit [westexflooring.com](http://westexflooring.com)





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# pure carpets

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1. Simply choose the unitary you would like to display in store (from a single unit to a whole shop fit)
2. Select from the range of suppliers and products available
3. SMG will help in planning your display
4. SMG will quote for your selection with discounts available for multi-unit orders.
5. SMG will deliver, install and merchandise the unitary
6. If you have a direct account with any of your chosen suppliers, simply order as usual under the Pure name
7. If you don't have a direct account, simply order via Orderlink (see the Orderlink info sheet for details)
8. If you have a direct account, sales will count towards your SMG rebate if applicable.
9. Goods are despatched to your nominated delivery address directly from the supplier

### Pure Carpets will:

- Get extra discounted prices on many of the top selling ranges
- Help to protect you from internet shoppers
- Give you protection from local comparison
- Give you the opportunity to sell products from a supplier you might be blocked from having a direct account with.
- Give you a high quality POS option for your store.



### SMG The National Furnishing Group

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**Telephone** 0118 932 3832 Fax 0118 930 4515

**Email** info@smg-group.co.uk **Web** www.smg-online.co.uk





## THE BENEFITS OF INTRODUCING A VISUALIZE IT VISUALIZER TO YOUR WEBSITE

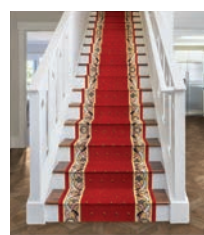
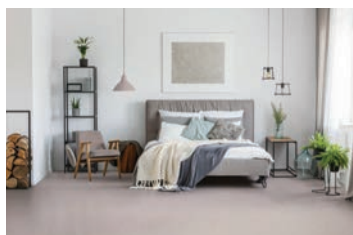
Why not utilise this amazing tool to increase sales, boost the effectiveness of your marketing and drive footfall into store?



UK DEVELOPERS OF ONLINE VISUALIZATION TECHNOLOGY SINCE 2003

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Provide your customer with confidence in their purchase decisions
- Increase sales across all products
- This visualizer uses AI technology to automatically show your products in situ using your customer's own uploaded room shot
- Provide your customer with a unique stairs visualizer for runners and edge to edge carpet – reassuring when the customer is tempted to try something different such as a pattern or stripe
- A visualizer can add value to your customer's samples
- Use the visualizer to produce high resolution marketing images
- Enjoy sensibly priced annual license fee to suit most budgets
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Contact us to arrange an online demo

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## A REPORT FROM THE CARPET FOUNDATION

### Consumers prefer bricks to clicks

A new study by Deloitte Digital shows that the move during the pandemic to online shopping has hit a real-life brick wall. Consumers now want to spend their money with people rather than faceless brands.

Almost half of those surveyed said they prefer to shop on their local high street and 33 per cent think the online experience just isn't good enough.

Libby Cousins of Deloitte said: "During lockdown consumers used local shops and services out of necessity. We're now seeing that they are using them out of choice. Whether it is due to the personal service, the quality of products or the sense of giving back to the local community, it is likely that these businesses will continue to benefit from a long-term increase in customer loyalty."

Consumers want to spend their money with people rather than faceless brands.

### Family business is a marketing opportunity

Long gone are the days when family businesses were seen as slightly embarrassing Heath-Robinson style companies, old-fashioned and a little less professional when compared to shareholder-owned firms.

Today, there are over 5 million family businesses in the UK, employing 14million people and more than 50% of all employees in the private sector. Of the 5 million family-owned businesses, nearly 80% are micro-businesses with no other employees and a further 901,000 employs between one and nine individuals. (IFB Research Foundation 2018.)

The flooring industry is flush with 'family' businesses. Independent retailers in our sector are bucking the trend both in terms of numbers and performance, while, on the manufacturing side, the likes of Cormar,

Brockway, Cavalier and Ulster are still proudly, and very successfully, family-owned and run.

Promoting oneself as a 'family' business has great marketing relevance in the current climate. It provides an opportunity to create a competitive advantage, add a point of differentiation and give a business 'an edge' and an identity that consumers can relate to.



It is also a powerful tool in building and reinforcing trust with consumers. It helps you move away from being a faceless organisation (at a time when there is distrust in big brands and organisations) and shows consumers the real people behind the business.

### A billboard put it beautifully:

**'When you buy from a local business, you're not helping a CEO buy a holiday home, you're helping a little girl get dance lessons, a little boy his team jersey and Mum and Dad to put food on the table.'**



Family businesses really care and there is a sense of being part of something where their voice is heard, recognised and appreciated. They breed loyalty from staff as well. The manufacturing side of our industry is littered with employees from the same family who have worked for the same company for generations – and proudly so. Now is the perfect time to shout about being family-owned and run as it will certainly resonate with consumers.

### The joys of a new carpet

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge recently celebrated their wedding anniversary. Not surprisingly, it was all over the media and we particularly enjoyed the recollections of the then 13-year-old soloist at their wedding. When asked of his recollections of the day, he said two things stood out - and one was the red carpet supplied by Victoria Carpets! Proof yet again of the difference a new carpet makes!



The Carpet Foundation is the UK carpet industry's lead body. It works exclusively for the benefit of independent carpet retailers promoting them and carpet to consumers. It is supported by most of the leading suppliers to the UK residential carpet market.

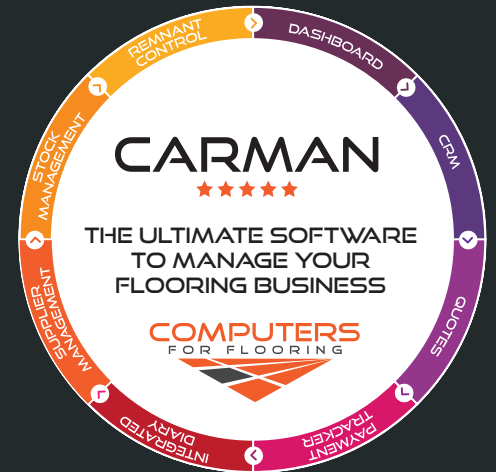




**CarMan is industry-specific, multi-award winning, cloud-based business management software by Computers for Flooring, able to manage every aspect of your flooring business. From single to multi-site retailers, wholesalers, CarMan will streamline your current business practice, improving efficiency and increasing profitability.**

CarMan will manage the entire sales process from initial customer contact through to order and delivery, with advanced stock management and reporting capabilities. CarMan's central dashboard gives users an overview of customers, suppliers, finance, sales, and staff performance at the touch of a button.

CarMan introduces an intuitive digital process with innovative market-leading features removing the reliance on paper. Computers for Flooring provides multiple solutions to the problems every flooring business faces in one complete network package all under one roof.



### CARMAN COMPANION APP

The CarMan Companion App is a game-changer for the Flooring sector allowing you to stay in control of your business whilst on the go. The CarMan Companion can manage your stock, deliveries, sales, and staff all from your handheld device. App users can also monitor sales data, product lines, profit and more all from the palm of your hand.



The latest features include the following:

- Full integrated diary
- Sales and performance statistics
- Proof of delivery functions
- Product database
- Device tracking
- Customer database
- Add and adjust stock
- Take a photo or upload a picture from the user's device
- Delivery checklist
- Customise user access
- All these features and much more



### DIGITAL DOCUMENT CREATION & SIGNING



We now offer full integration with the market-leading digital document e-sign company, Yoti-Sign.

CarMan users can manage new contracts directly from the system and get a notification when the document has been signed. The signed document is then sent back via email ready to store in the client's file in the CarMan software

- Secure signing with optional identity verification
- Secure signing with full encryption
- Legally binding

The e-signatures are fully admissible in court and compliant with eIDAS, the ESIGN Act and the UETA Act. YOTI-SIGN is recognised in over 64 countries, making it easier to get documents signed around the world. The e-sign platform provides you with a full document audit trail to have full control of the signing process.

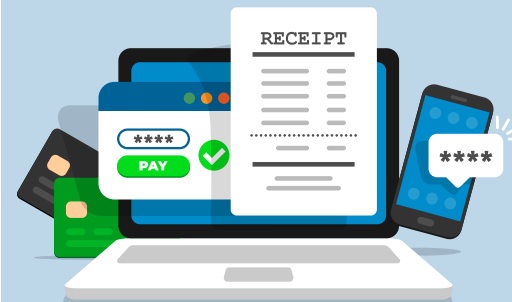


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## THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The new FO Collection is the latest arrival to the Kettle Interiors Agencies stable.

With these exciting additions, homeowners can enjoy all the practical design advantages of modern furniture, but in a collection that embraces the very best in traditional styling.

### The perfect mix.

This charming collection is bursting with detail, from a beautiful modern grey oak to pewter effect handles, it brings character and sits well in both traditional and modern spaces.

### Dining delight.

The comprehensive collection comprises 31 items, of which 17 sit within the dining category. A selection of trestle tables can be paired with either of two chairs and/or popular dining benches for a striking dining display. With a selection of sideboards and a choice of tops to suit all space saving needs, FO is ready to fulfil any appetite for modern farmhouse style.

### Living Luxe.

The 14-strong living range is packed full of traditionally styled items that have been cleverly adapted to meet the needs of modern homes. From innovative storage concepts to home-office solutions, many items are designed to fit together in a modular fashion for the very best in design flexibility.

### Get the look.

Visitors to the Summer Furniture Show were the first to witness this new addition first hand. However, if you could not make it to Telford you can catch them again at the AIS, Northpoint and Minerva Shows.

Contact your local Kettle Interiors Sales Representative or get in touch our customer service team on 01536 444960 or email to arrange an appointment or place an order.

For further information contact Kettle Interiors Agencies on 01536 444960 or email [sales@kettleinteriorsagencies.com](mailto:sales@kettleinteriorsagencies.com)





## INTERFLOOR'S FIRST FULLY SUSTAINABLE GREEN UNDERLAY

Interfloor, Europe's largest flooring and accessories manufacturer, is launching its first sustainable and ethically produced underlay this month.



**renu® manufactured at the company's UK site in Haslington, Lancashire, is an innovative high-quality underlay combining Interfloor's established features of luxury and comfort with a product that is driven by a vision to aim for 100% recycling in the manufacture and after life of a high-quality underlay.**

The company says its research\* showed: 88% said they would prefer to choose a carpet underlay that is recycled/recyclable over one that is not.

91% said they consider a product that can be recycled to be important.  
86% of respondents worry about the amount of waste going to landfill.  
99% of respondents recycle some if not all their household waste.  
79% of respondents aren't aware of any recycled or recyclable underlays.  
renu® green credentials

The **renu®** underlay is part of Interfloor's Tredaire family and is made from 98%

recycled materials, using ethically sourced and genuinely recycled materials, which means keeping waste from landfill and is 100% recyclable itself!

The main body of the underlay is made of foam reclaimed from recycled soft furnishings, this foam is then mixed with a binding agent and subject to high temperature steam under high pressure. The backing is made from 100% recycled and unbleached paper and we use vegetable-based inks for printing. The film used on renu is made from an ethically produced, carbon-negative bio-based film that comes from sugar cane. The sugar cane actively captures CO2 from the atmosphere, whilst at the same time releasing oxygen – making this material not just green, but proactively green. This same recyclable bio-based film or 100% recycled plastic is also used for the packaging. At all times striving to use the most environmentally friendly options possible.



Energy efficient renu® has a high tog rating, which means it is a great insulator which will help keep houses warm and save energy.

**renu®** is made from high-density foam which will protect the pile of carpets from premature wear.

CEO John Cooper said: "we are all rightly concerned about how we treat our planet, and we know there is a genuine desire from consumers for sustainable products that genuinely meet the green agenda, so we set out to create an underlay that met those aspirations. renu® is without question the most sustainable underlay in our long history, and we were delighted we could match our company values with those of consumers in striving for this full circle of 'no waste'.

We have used post-consumer waste, car tyres and plastic bottles in the manufacture of our underlay for many years. But we knew we could go even further and responding to this aspiration for a fully sustainable product, **renu®** is made from 98% recycled materials, using ethically sourced and genuinely recycled materials, which means keeping waste from landfill and most importantly is 100% recyclable itself!

"We have made great strides in improving efficiency and increasing sustainability over the decades, but this new product is a game-changer, bringing together raw materials that we save from going to landfill with some that actually have a positive effect on the environment."

**To find out more contact  
01706 238810 or  
visit [www.interfloor.com/renu](http://www.interfloor.com/renu)**

**renu®**  
sustainable recycled underlay

Interfloor, part of the Victoria plc group of companies and was created by the merger of Tredaire and Duralay in 2002 but its heritage dates back to the 1940s when Duralay began manufacturing the first underlays in the UK. Interfloor is also Europe's largest and leading manufacturer of carpet underlay and flooring accessories supplying products to flooring retailers, distributors and flooring contractors in the UK and around the world. The company manufactures a diverse range of products including the three most popular forms of underlay – polyurethane foam, sponge rubber and crumb rubber. We also produce carpet gripper, floor edgings, flooring adhesives, tapes and tools. It's goal is to be the supplier of first choice to our customers by providing better products, better brands and better service to enable them to be successful.

Introducing  
**renu**  
sustainable recycled underlay

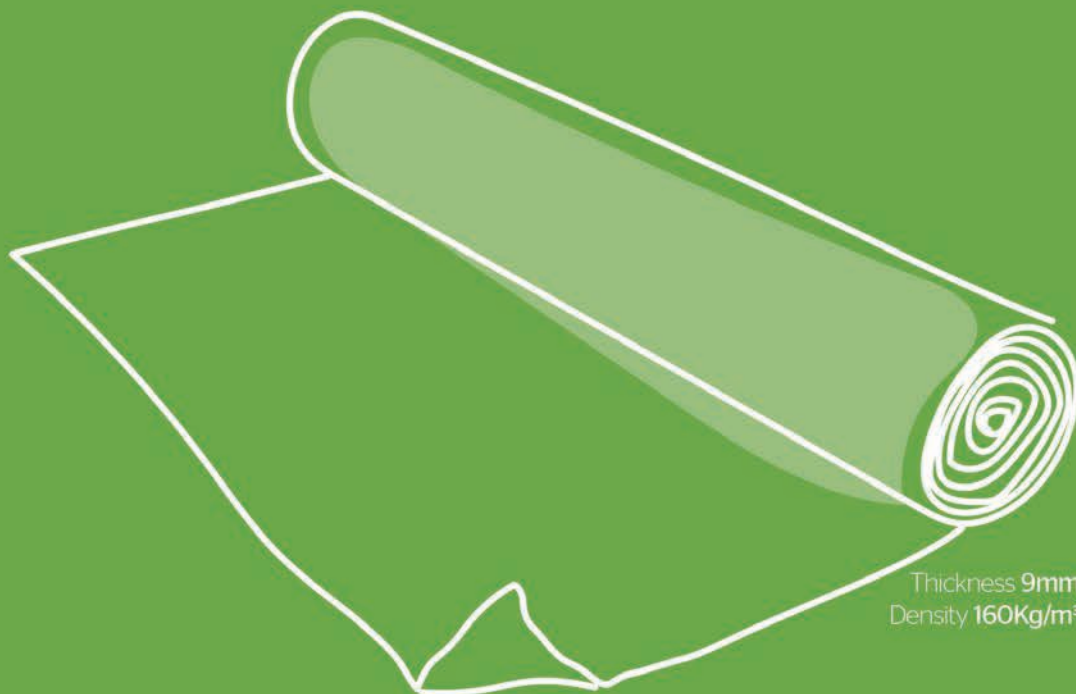
I'm  
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BIO-BASED

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MADE  
IN THE UK



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Density 160Kg/m<sup>3</sup>

**NEW** from **tredaire**

# SUSTAINABLE RECYCLED UNDERLAY

Made from 98% recycled materials  
whilst also being 100% recyclable.

*Say 'no' to waste*

renu® uses ethically sourced and genuinely recycled materials; keeping waste from landfill and being fully recyclable itself.

And, the really cool bit is, when your underlay has reached the end of its life, it can be collected and used to create new rolls of renu®!



Discover More  
[www.interfloor.com/renu](http://www.interfloor.com/renu)

Call Us  
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**interfloor**



# PREPARING FOR THE END OF FURLOUGH

The end of the furlough scheme is only a few months away. Many businesses have been reliant on the scheme to stay afloat during the pandemic, but now it's being phased out. With the final deadline on 30th September 2021, we've put together a few steps to make sure your business is ready for the day when support is no longer available...



## 01 Determine who is going to be asked back

Who do you need back right now? There may be some roles that need to be filled more than others. When making decisions, focus purely on the role, not the person, to avoid discrimination.



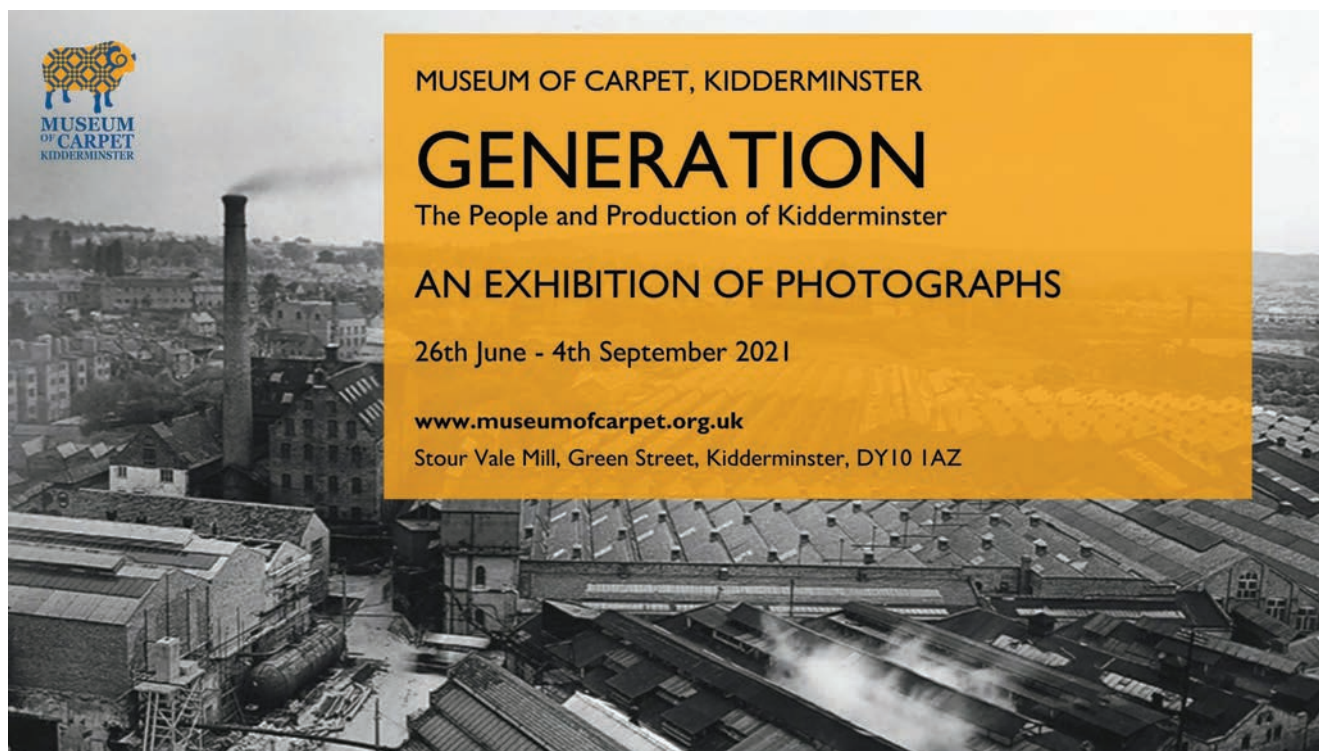
## 02 Consider flexible furlough


How much work will staff do when they return? Flexible furlough, where staff remain on furlough on a part-time basis, remains an option until September 2021—use it.



## SUMMER EXHIBITION OF STUNNING PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE MUSEUM OF CARPET ARCHIVE

**Generation: The People and Production of Kidderminster** opens on Saturday 26th June and runs until 4th September 2021. With photographs and objects from the Museum of Carpet's archive, **Generation** tells stories of an industry and community.





MUSEUM  
OF CARPET  
KIDDERMINSTER

MUSEUM OF CARPET, KIDDERMINSTER

# GENERATION

The People and Production of Kidderminster

## AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

26th June - 4th September 2021

[www.museumofcarpet.org.uk](http://www.museumofcarpet.org.uk)  
Stour Vale Mill, Green Street, Kidderminster, DY10 1AZ

The exhibition explores the local place at a time when we have all been forced to slow down and stay close to home.

In Kidderminster, a single-industry town with a world-leading carpet industry, generations of local families worked in the same carpet factories.

This makes it a rich place to explore connections and shared experiences between generations: what has changed over the last century, as well as what has stayed the same.

The exhibition includes a free outdoor exhibition outside Morrisons supermarket made possible by the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Sue Hetherington,**  
**Museum Manager, said:**

**“This grant allows the museum to display photographs from our collection to local people whose heritage we are here to celebrate. By meeting you outside, we hope to put everyone at ease.”**



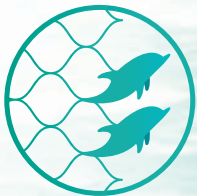
Generation also includes a selection of photographs submitted to the Museum of Carpet's photography open call by local photographers, children and young people. They show life in Kidderminster and surrounding areas now on the themes of legacy, hope and the future.

Generation: The People and Production of Kidderminster runs from 26th June – 4th September 2021 and is included in a standard museum entry ticket.

**With thanks to our exhibition funders:  
The Arts Society, The Newcomen Society and the Culture Recovery Fund.**

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





# SEDNA®

Super soft carpet saving sea life





# SEDNA®

## SUPER SOFT CARPET SAVING SEA LIFE

Sedna® carpet is **soft, luxurious and durable**. It is made with ECONYL® regenerated nylon, a yarn made from **recycled waste** material such as old carpets and **abandoned fishing nets** collected from the bottom of the sea. Sedna® thus helps to **save thousands of beautiful sea creatures** like sea turtles, dolphins and seals that will no longer get stuck in this life-threatening waste.

Moreover, Sedna® carpet has an ECO FusionBac textile back, made from **100% recycled PET plastic bottles**.

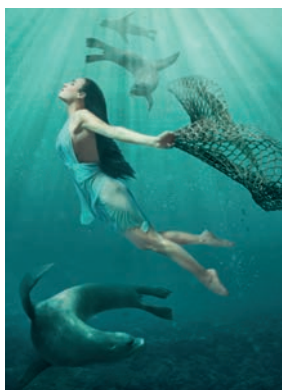


## RANGES

Sedna® carpet comes in two alluring ranges, inspired by the mysterious depths of the seas. All over the world, the seas and oceans are worshipped through deities that personify their grandeur.



VARUNA



YARA



AWARD WINNING SEDNA DISPLAY

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[www.sedna-carpet.co.uk](http://www.sedna-carpet.co.uk)



A UK brand since 1964





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The perfect partner for your Penthouse Carpet

Providing sumptuous underfoot comfort, combined with superior sound absorption and thermal insulation; we recommend our EcoFelt underlays to enhance the performance of your carpet.

## Comfort

Recycled wool rich felt, suitable for Heavy domestic.

## Opulence

Recycled wool rich felt, suitable for Extra Heavy domestic.

## Majesty

Recycled wool rich felt with recycled rubber crumb back, suitable for Super Heavy domestic.

To find out more, speak to our sales team or contact your local representative:

Call **01706 639 866** or visit [penthousecarpets.co.uk](http://penthousecarpets.co.uk)



# TRULY NATURAL FIBRE, WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Wool is truly amazing, and New Zealand wool offers benefits for the health and wellbeing of humans, animals and our planet.



## PLANET FRIENDLY

100% Renewable | 100% Biodegradable |  
100% traceable | Low carbon footprint |  
Energy saving | Animal friendly



## PEOPLE FRIENDLY

Fire safe | Warmer | Softer | Quieter |  
Allergy safe | Asthma safe



## STYLE FRIENDLY

Easy to clean | Naturally stain resistant |  
Retains appearance | Versatile textures



Find out more about Wools of New Zealand

 [info.uk@woolnz.com](mailto:info.uk@woolnz.com)

 [www.woolnz.com](http://www.woolnz.com)





# SMG MEMBERS FOCUS

EACH ISSUE SMG PUTS A MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AND THEIR VIEWS ABOUT THE INDUSTRY.

**MEMBER:** MARSHALL CARPETS LIMITED  
**JOINED SMG:** JANUARY 1995  
**LOCATION:** WORTHING, WEST SUSSEX

SMG are very pleased to feature longstanding member Norman Marshall of Marshall Carpets Ltd in this special interview – marking the 30-year anniversary of successful trading from his home furnishings store in Worthing. Many changes have been made over the 30 years, but the quality of service, specialist knowledge and welcoming reception have never changed. Now with his son Declan learning the business, I'm sure this success will continue for many years to come.



The Marshalls team comprises L – R Declan Marshall, Lee Penn, Norman Marshall and Matt Foan (not in picture).

Norman started his retail career as a greengrocer – back when we had proper grocers. However, after a year of 1am trips to the market to buy the produce and working all day in store, he found that his social life was becoming seriously impaired. His uncle Des was MD of Harris Carpets at the time and said to young Norman that he would be able to find him a job in one of his stores. Norman jumped at the chance of working more sociable hours. His uncle said to give it 3 months, see if he liked it. Well Norman loved it and went from strength to strength there.

At 20 he was managing the Guildford store, at 21 he was managing the Chichester store and was beginning to think that this was the sector for him, but what he really wanted was to be his own boss. So, at the age of 23 Norman opened his very own store in Waterlooville and his business continued to grow from there.

In 1991 he decided to move the business to pastures new and found an old Lloyds bank building in Worthing which was being sold off. He brought the property and opened Marshall Carpets. Now, 30 years on, he owns several properties adjacent to the original store and has been able to redevelop them into the large home furnishings business it is today.

**SMG put the usual questions to Norman, and here's what he said:**

### WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE INDEPENDENT RETAILER'S STRENGTH?

"I would say it has to be customer service, knowledge and flexibility. You don't get that with the multiples or with on-line traders. There's nothing like a family business to give every sale the personal touch and the customer feels valued and important – you just don't get that if you buy on-line."

### WHAT IS THE KEY MARKET CHALLENGE TODAY?

"Definitely internet trading. The whole Covid lockdown situation has just exacerbated the problem by driving sales towards on-line purchasing which is now making it even harder to compete on price for the Independent."

### SMG HAS A STRONG POLICY OF SUPPORTING BRITISH MANUFACTURERS, IS THIS SOMETHING YOU SUPPORT?

"We very much like to try to but these manufacturers are becoming rarer. We try to support companies like Cormar and Hugh Mackay whenever we can."

### WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON QUESTIONS YOU HAVE FROM CUSTOMERS?

"I find that they always ask how long it's going to take to get their product – speed of delivery is important usually. Also they are looking for general good quality advice as the whole amount of choice can be overwhelming."

### IF YOU COULD ASK SUPPLIERS TO CHANGE ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"Information in real time on stock availability. Some of our suppliers offer this already but this information is so essential to a retailer."

### WHAT IS YOUR TOP SELLING PRODUCT AT THE MOMENT?

"Amtico for LVT and Primo Ultra & Primo Naturals from Cormar are our top sellers currently."

### WHAT WAS THE MAIN REASON FOR JOINING SMG?

"Particularly appealing was the access to a wider choice of products and suppliers that it gave us as well as access to more competitive pricing than we would have had when we were setting out as a new business."



Norman Marshall



Marshall Carpets 1991

**WHAT WOULD YOUR ADVICE BE TO NON-ALIGNED RETAILERS?**

“Join a buying group for the above reasons and to also to stop people blocking you on accounts. Even if you can't get a direct account, being part of SMG gives you access to the products you need.”

**WHAT HAS CHANGED MOST DURING YOUR TIME IN THE INDUSTRY?**

“The internet has now become a major factor and as a result I think lead to less customer loyalty than there used to be.”

**HOW HAS COVID AFFECTED YOUR BUSINESS DURING THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS?**

“We are finding that business now involves less face to face contact and meetings both with customers and suppliers. More sales are discussed on the phone or by appointment these days. Also, I would say I have noticed that we don't have one predictable busy day any more – like Saturdays used to be – business is now spread much more evenly than it used to be. Whether that is due to more people working from home or being furloughed I don't know.”

“**We can't predict everything a customer might do...**”



Marshall Carpets 2021



**MARSHALL CARPETS**  
1991 - 1998





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