

# SMG NEWS

magazine



westex.

FLOORING EXCELLENCE



# ETERNITY

SOFTNESS TO LAST



LIFETIME STAINSAFE  
WARRANTY



ETERNAL BLEACH  
CLEANABILITY



20 YEARS  
WEAR WARRANTY



INFINITE  
LIGHT FASTNESS



EVERLASTING  
SOFTNESS

Inspired by the delicacy & resistance of blossom in nature.

Eternity carpets are made from the next generation fibre

**2ply polyamide Imprel Finesse Solution Dyed** – a strong, extra fine and stain resistant yarn –

Making you enjoy Eternity for years to come, confident in your carpet's easy maintenance and long-lasting beauty.

Anemone is an elegant and sophisticated carpet for your home. Its fine and dense velvet structure offers a premium feel and its silken sheen plays with light to give a delicate touch to its palette of modern neutral hues.

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



Anemone



Lily

LAUNCHING  
OVER THE NEXT  
2 MONTHS:  
ETERNITY'S  
ANEMONE AND LILY!

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FLOORING EXCELLENCE



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# Linwood

by

## CORMAR

CARPET CO



A premier, fine quality, tenth gauge carpet manufactured in a variety of 16 plain and heather shades.

Luxuriously soft, yet durable, Linwood is made from 100% Excellon – a polypropylene fibre renowned for its stain resistance and hardwearing properties.



## WELCOME

A few words from SMG...



Dear Members

Spring is in the air!

That has been extremely evident with plenty of 'spring cleaning' that we are currently seeing of ranges/unitary and POS, not just from our Suppliers but with our members too. People are moving premises, upgrading their stores and generally looking onwards and upwards. With so much that we can't change in the world at the moment, it makes us even more grateful to live in safe and comfortable home. Home improvements, people moving house and new trends in colour are all fuelling sales and the market continues to be buoyant. It's really good to see more colour coming into the arena too for spring and summer this year with greens, blues, golds and terracotta coming into trend. Not only is this great in people's homes, it's fantastic in retail stores as it adds so much more interest and draws the consumer's eye.

The first quarter of 2022 has seen continued strong sales and optimism in the market. It will be interesting to see if this continues through the summer months with people now able to spend their money on taking holidays again. One thing that is for certain is that nothing is certain - we can't predict the market!

Here at SMG, we are busy gearing up for the Buying Groups' National Flooring Show in May. After a 2-year hiatus it's going to be fantastic to be there at the show on 17th & 18th May, chatting with our members and showing them all the great new initiatives we will be introducing. No spoilers here though! You will have to register and come along to see us in our usual spot in Room 1 (at the top of the stairs).

You really don't want to miss this – all the top Suppliers to the Group will be under one roof in Solihull so it's a fabulous opportunity to discuss new products, unitary and even new accounts. Also, there are many 'Show only' offers available that you won't want to miss out on. What more could you want from a Show?!

Get yourself registered by visiting [www.bgnfs.co.uk/register](http://www.bgnfs.co.uk/register).

As always, 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 participant for our 'Question Time' feature – we are thrilled that Michael Turner, Sales Director at Westex Flooring has kindly taken the time to answer our questions.

Read all about what Michael has to say on page 30 & 31. Starring in our 'At the Sharp End' feature we have Philippa Poitras, sales representative for Ulster Carpets. Philippa has some very interesting answers to our questions so don't miss that on page 15

This issue our Member Focus feature is back, and we are showcasing a fantastic retailer who is relatively new to the Group. Ashley Cooke's Carpets & Furniture is a wonderful store in Malton, North Yorkshire. The store has recently expanded and is well laid out, light and bright and the business is going from strength to strength. You can read all about them on page 58 & 59.

We also have a fantastic bonus feature in this issue from industry legend and Chairman of SMG, Mr Chris Moffat. Chris speaks very candidly about his more than 45 years in the trade, all the changes he has seen and all the characters that have shaped the industry over those years. It's a fantastic insight into the whole business, the market trends over the years and Chris' advice to both Suppliers and Retailers! Read all about it on page 34.

All that remains for me to say is that this spring SMG News is, as always, jam packed with the latest industry 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.

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 2022.

Kind regards

Mike Reed  
Head of Group Operations



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## BRILLIANT CARPET WITH A NATURAL TOUCH

Brilliant colours • Silky touch • Easy maintenance • Excellent colour fastness



## NEW FOR 2022 GAIA® - AW's POLYESTER BRAND

**Polyester** is the most widely used textile fibre in the world.  
Polyester is **alluring & smooth to the touch**.

**Gaia®** carpet with its **excellent colour fastness, rich lustre and 100% virgin pile material** will certainly enrich your home.

And no maintenance issues whatsoever:  
**Gaia®** carpet is **bleach cleanable**.



**Indus, Dorado, Tigris, Ganges...** names of famous and less well-known rivers. But all are threatened by plastic and other pollution. Start contributing to solve this problem now by buying products containing recycled plastics.

**ECO FusionBac is a unique premium carpet backing. It is made from 100% recycled pet plastic bottles.**

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[www.associated-weavers.co.uk](http://www.associated-weavers.co.uk)

A UK brand  
since 1964





NEW 100% WOOL DESIGNS  
FROM ULSTER



Ulster Carpets have added to their environmental credentials with news that they have received recognition for their green leadership coming ahead of the launch of two new 100% wool carpet designs.

The company have unveiled two new designs in their beautiful Open Spaces Laneve™ range.

Raglan and Napier are available in eight new colourways based around the sun, sea and surf of the two beautiful seaside locations on New Zealand's North Island that they take their name from.

The Open Spaces Laneve™ tufted loop range already includes Auckland, Queenstown and Wellington Stripe. The addition of the new Raglan and Napier designs will provide customers with an even greater degree of choice. With four natural tones and four modern greys, Raglan and Napier are made from 100% Laneve™ New Zealand wool that is suitable for heavy residential applications. Ulster Carpets have developed the Open Spaces Laneve™ range in partnership with Wools of New Zealand. This wool is fully traceable and is supplied by farmers who must meet a comprehensive range of environmental, social responsibility and animal welfare standards.

This approach meets the growing demand from the public for environmentally conscious products and it will be enhanced further with news that Ulster Carpets have achieved Silver in the 2021 Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking survey.

The Survey recognises and rewards organisations that go above and beyond their legal requirements to improve their environmental impacts and better manage their resources. Ulster Carpets have a strategic plan to reduce their impact on the planet and the Silver Award follows on from the recent switch to green energy generated by local, renewable sources to power their manufacturing and warehouse facilities in Portadown. Part of that strategic plan also involves reducing the amount of carpet ending up in landfill, which is being achieved through Ulster's Axfelt Triple Layer Underlay.

Manufactured at Ulster's facilities in Devon, Axfelt is made from 100% recycled materials, including recycled wool, cloth, carpet and tyres.

With more and more customers keen to learn more about underlay, Ulster have now added a new section to their website that is dedicated to Axfelt.

Raglan and Napier are available in colour-matching 5m, 4m, 3m, 2m and 1m Multi Widths. This unique service allows customers to buy the amount of carpet that they need; reducing overall costs alongside the amount of waste produced.

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

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



CORMAR CARPET COMPANY ADDS  
NEW RANGE TO ITS POPULAR EASY  
CLEAN TWIST CARPET COLLECTION

Following the successful launches of the 80/20 wool twist, Woodland Heather Twist and the contemporary stippled Primo Tweeds, award winning Cormar Carpet Company is starting 2022 by launching a new addition to its extremely popular easy clean family, Linwood.

Made with 100% Excellon – a polypropylene fibre renowned for its stain resistance and hardwearing properties – Linwood also comes with a 10 year stain and wear warranty, providing today's hectic households with added peace of mind.

This soft yet durable range is manufactured on tenth gauge machinery to ensure a dense, luxurious finish and is available in four and five metre widths. Featured in an extensive palette of 16 modern shades, the collection is a mix of plains and heathers in a luxury twist pile.

As well as bringing a new bank of on-trend shades to Cormar's easy clean family, Linwood will be displayed on Cormar's new-look point of sale material, featuring an eye-catching design and communicating the ranges key benefits to the consumer.



**"We've had great success with our 'family' of easy-clean carpets over the past few years, as homeowners increasingly look for durable, great value, low maintenance carpets. With that in mind, we created Linwood to sit between our Primo Plus and Primo Ultra ranges, offering homeowners more choice when looking for something that ticks all the boxes of a luxury, family friendly carpet at an attractive, affordable price."**

David Cormack, Cormar Carpets

Cormar Carpets is proud to produce its extensive range of carpet at its two Lancashire mills. Cormar delivers across the UK and Ireland from its distribution sites in Hemel Hempstead and Bury, using its fleet of over 70 vehicles to ensure a fast, reliable service.

With an industry-leading trade portal and dedicated, experienced sales and customer service team, Cormar offer retailers 24/7 access to ordering, delivery tracking, and online account management, as well as servicing its customer base through a team of over 30 sales representatives.



For further information on the Linwood range or any other Cormar Carpet ranges, visit [www.cormarcarpets.co.uk](http://www.cormarcarpets.co.uk)



## FURLONG FLOORING TAKES ITS 'ONE HOME' MESSAGE INTO 2022



At the end of last year, Furlong Flooring embarked on a campaign to let its customers know that it was bringing its heritage brands – Regency Carpets, Natural Solutions and Design Elements – under the Furlong Flooring umbrella.

Backed by retailers taking on the company's award-winning new display stands, this campaign has been a success, with increasing

numbers of retailers and contractors using the new Furlong Flooring branding. With its own carpet manufacturing facility in Belfast, designing and delivering quality carpets across all price points, the Regency Carpets' brand in particular has been one of the reasons for Furlong Flooring's success in the market.

Furlong Flooring have been able to support retailers to offer a wide range of carpets from everyday value ranges to luxury deep-pile collections. Added to that is Furlong Flooring's hard wood and laminate collections, plus its ever-growing vinyl and LVT ranges. And all of these flooring options are supported by Furlong Flooring's central operations – warehousing, deliveries, administrative support and sales reps.

“We're aware of how important our heritage brands have been to retailers,” says Mike Symonds, MD at Furlong Flooring's Dartford facility. “Having our own design and manufacturing facility here in the UK is one of the reasons that we've got a great reputation for quality and delivery. Bringing Regency Carpets under the Furlong Flooring brand is just the next step in consolidating our market offering.”

## FURLONG FLOORING TAKES ITS 'ONE HOME' MESSAGE INTO 2022

It looks like 2022 is the year of expanding ranges from the business. Furlong Flooring has already launched a new range of vinyl products, and there are several new carpet ranges due for launch in the coming months – giving retailers quality carpet options across all price points.

The company is also focusing on smooth flooring this year, with more to come on hard wood and laminate stocks and support for retailers and contractors when it comes to product display and fitting support. Customers will also benefit from Furlong's many product innovations – including carpets made with carefree bleach-cleanable fibres, and their award-winning Combi-bac® backing – and from its commitment to delivering the best customer service.

In fact, putting customer service first has been at the forefront of Furlong's planning during the past couple of years. In a recent letter to customers, the company said:



“Like all businesses, we are now seeing the impact of the strains that Covid, along with other issues, have had on our supply chain. Like all businesses that operate a delivery fleet, we are seeing a shortage of drivers, and like all businesses, we are adjusting to managing delays on product arriving into our warehouses. And we know that things like consistent and reliable deliveries

are one of the most important parts of that service. Customers really appreciate the fact that they know we'll deliver when we say we can.”

Visit [www.furlongflooring.com](http://www.furlongflooring.com)

furlong flooring



# take a fresh look at Cavalier..



visit  
us on stand  
P430

## The Family Carpet Maker...

Cavalier Carpets launches new branding focused on family ownership.

As a second generation British family owned business, our commitment to quality, product knowledge and building lasting relationships remains key. Families are all about relationships, and today, our lineage extends far beyond just our owners. Our family values are at the core of our business, and we count our employees and our business partners as valuable members of the Cavalier family. We offer a diverse range of quality carpets, featuring environmentally friendly wool based options.

Our sales representatives will be visiting our retail partners in the coming months to update point of sale with our new branding and new colour additions.



tel: 01254 268000 [www.cavaliercarpets.co.uk](http://www.cavaliercarpets.co.uk)



## 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.



### Crosswords

**Clue: A compliment is just the opposite when you take me out of the muddle (9 letters)**

**If you've worked out the answer, how would you define it?**

(and if you need help finding the answer, it's printed at the bottom of this column.)

**'An expression of grief and dissatisfaction; finding fault; a grievance' says The Chambers dictionary - but this doesn't help us when we all have stories about unreasonable customers who remain dissatisfied when we've gone above and beyond what we feel to be generous.**

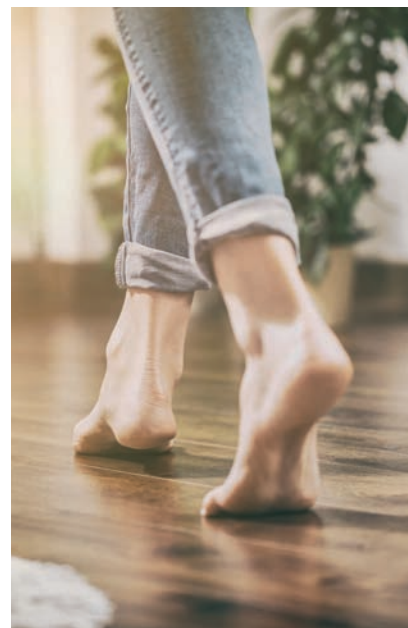
In law, all our work should be carried out with reasonable skill and care, and what we sell should be of satisfactory quality and fit for purpose. These are legal requirements (known as 'implied terms' by lawyers), but there can often be disagreement about what is acceptable.

Almost all flooring products and materials have detailed specifications and instructions which either come with the product or can be downloaded from the manufacturers' websites.

There are also British Standards covering almost all types of flooring products and installation.

These Standards are set by groups which include experienced flooring professionals and they set out what is good practice to help installers and those assessing the quality of any job.

If there is a difference between the instructions and the Standard, it is the manufacturer's instructions which must be adhered to.



The British Standards are helpful in defining how a finished job is to be assessed:

**'When completed, floors should be inspected from a normal viewing position either standing or seated. When viewing the flooring, only those features which are immediately obvious to any independent party should be considered as potential defect issues. Careful positioning of backlighting or unusual viewing angles (crouching or kneeling, etc) would not be considered reasonable criteria for identifying a visual defect' (BS 8201: 2011)**

That neatly covers off appearance issues, but how much of what we do is actually never seen by our customers yet could still have an impact on the flooring over time? Poorly laid, or the incorrect underlay for example? 'Hidden' defects are still defects, even if they only come to light at a much later date.

I'd therefore suggest we broaden our definition to include: 'Any defect which adversely affects, or could affect, the satisfactory appearance, fitness for purpose, or performance of the flooring now or during its reasonable life expectancy. This excludes normal wear and tear.'

If you're getting cross words from your customers, this may help you to assess the situation and find the right solution.

**Richard Renouf**  
[www.richard-renouf.com](http://www.richard-renouf.com)

Answer: Complaint ('A compliment' minus 'me muddled up')

## WILD THING I THINK I LOVE YOU...

### LOVE STORY

### Wild Silk

in colour Pebble Beach, from our brand new range in the Love Story Collection



### Get in Touch

[sales@abingdonflooring.co.uk](mailto:sales@abingdonflooring.co.uk)  
[www.abingdonflooring.co.uk](http://www.abingdonflooring.co.uk)  
01274 655 694



**ABINGDON**  
FLOORING



## TRUST US WITH THE DETAIL

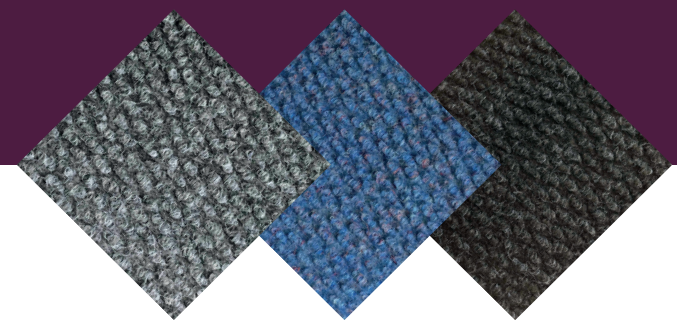
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**10 Year Warranty**



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**sales@heckmondwike-fb.co.uk**

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**MADE IN THE UK.**  
**MADE TO LAST.**

## at the SHARP END

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



Philippa Poitras is the sales representative for Ulster Carpets covering the East Anglia area. She has been with Ulster for over 18 years but has been in the flooring trade for 37 years now, so has seen many changes in the flooring industry through her career. With this wealth of experience in sales, we are excited to hear about Philippa's thoughts from her viewpoint at 'the sharp end'.

### HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE TRADE?

I started as a sales administrator and typist at Brintons. I worked in their London Showroom in Kensington and learnt all about the business from the ground up. This understanding of the flooring trade really helped as a foundation for moving to a sales career.

I'll be presenting new products, the next I can be in with a drill, updating stand side panels! Having time to do everything is a challenge so organisation is a must for me.

### OUTSIDE OF WORK, WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

I particularly enjoy 'trying' to play Golf!! I also love Sudoku and visiting friends and family.

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

I would say that their broad knowledge of carpets and flooring is key to delivering a fantastic service to their customers. Being able to sell all types of products enables them to recommend the one that is just right for each customer and is an important factor to the retailers I call on.

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

I would have liked to have been an Air Hostess, but I am too short!! Probably I would be in the hotel business which is where I started my working life.

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

The move towards consumers buying man-made carpets has been a big shift but, I feel the return to quality wool products is beginning to happen, especially in my area. The quality, durability, sustainability and the beauty of these products is coming back to the fore in flooring choice.

### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE KEY MARKET CHALLENGE FOR RETAILERS AT THE MOMENT?

A very real challenge for flooring retailers is that a lot of experienced fitters are starting to retire, and it has become rarer for young fitters / apprentices to come into the industry. Finding great fitters is going to become increasingly difficult unless this trend is addressed.

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

Well, it isn't really a piece of advice but when I started in the industry on the road, I was one of the only female reps. I was the first one for Brintons and Woodward Grosvenor.

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

My favourite product would have to be Grange Wilton fitted on quality Axfelt underlay. I have it in my own house so I have to say that don't I? I am quite fortunate in my area that I have retailers that can, and do, sell a broad range of our products whether it be Loops, Wiltons or Axminsters.

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

Nothing! I feel that any retailer can be successful and there isn't a one size fits all philosophy in our trade. The diversity just adds to the interest in my opinion.

### AS A REPRESENTATIVE WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

Having enough time in the day! No two days are the same at Ulster. I'm sure my retailers will attest to that too as one day

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

**ulster**<sup>TM</sup>

ULSTER CARPETS WAS FOUNDED BY GEORGE WALTER WILSON IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN 1938 AND IS STILL OWNED BY THE FOUNDER'S FAMILY. ULSTER HAS TAKEN THE POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH BEING A FAMILY COMPANY AND COMBINED THEM WITH A FORWARD THINKING, GLOBAL APPROACH TO BUSINESS. AS THE LARGEST SINGLE SITE PRODUCER OF AXMINSTER AND WILTON CARPET IN THE WORLD, THEY HAVE BEEN PRODUCING CARPETS IN NORTHERN IRELAND FOR OVER 80 YEARS.





Brintons' latest collaboration with Country Life offers a beautiful collection of textured carpets woven using 100% undyed British Wool offering a more sustainable choice for the home. Inspired by nature, the designs re-create the shapes found in plants and wildlife in a structural, three-dimensional way using the cut and loop weaving technique. Gentle hues in bamboo and cloud have been chosen to highlight the soft lustre of undyed wool.



# Brintons

The Velvet Collection by Brintons is the ultimate in luxury and sophistication. Designed with a new denser pile, it's soft and tactile to the touch, whilst being tough and durable. The elegant palette of twenty colours offers beautiful pale shades of creams and beiges through to gorgeous jewel-like greens and deep blues, alongside versatile greys and silvers.

Brintons.co.uk  
Tel: 01562 820000

Wyre Forest House,  
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DY11 7WF.



A LETTER FROM  
MARTIN CURTIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE  
WOOL CARPET FOCUS GROUP



“

Friends, Romans, Countrymen...

**“Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to bury Wool, not to praise it. The evil that Wool does doesn’t live after it, the good is oft biodegraded naturally within landfill or the ocean; So let it be with Wool... The synthetic conglomerates hath told you Wool was ambitious and environmentally unfriendly: If it were so, it is a grievous fault and grievously hath Wool answered it... Here, under leave of Plastics and the rest, (for synthetics are an honourable fibre; So are they all, honourable man-made fibres). Come I to speak in Wool’s funeral.... Wool was my friend. Faithful and just to me: But Plastics say wool was ambitious; And Plastics are an honourable fibre... Wool has brought many jobs home to the UK, whose industries did the general coffers fill: Did this in Wool seem ambitious? When the environment has cried, Wool has wept: Ambition should be made of sterner stuff: Yes Plastics say Wool was ambitious; And Plastics are an honourable fibre.....”**

Barking mad you might say but for some reason the speech by Mark Antony struck a chord for me. Wool and sheep farmers have done so much for us all over the years that we take it for granted and cease to value it for what it really is.

In my opinion, wool has stood the test of time and it is only due to the massive

onslaught of the synthetic fibre industry that its name and reputation has been tarnished. We should never forget.

Wool has an abundance of benefits that we all share. Look at the website [woolcarpetsnaturally.org](http://woolcarpetsnaturally.org) for some inspiration. It is a shame that synthetics seem to want to eradicate sheep and the multitude of benefits that are derived from them. Greed, perhaps shameless ambition to get us all to forget why wool is the greatest fibre nature ever produced?

Wool does take a little more time to explain. Why is wool best, better than all the rest? Take a little time to read about Woolabilities on the website above.

We don’t always have a choice, we can’t replace all plastics like polypropylene or polyester with wool but we can make a small difference every time we are able to make a choice.

The wool industry is fragmented; it isn’t a multi-billion dollar earner and it is incredible how it has survived despite all the pressures piled over it, like a giant plastic sheet than never biodegrades and leaves its mark on us for decades. Somehow our message has survived. Plastics are a necessary evil in many cases, but they should not be allowed to trample over nature’s finest.

As Chairman of the Wool Carpet Focus Group and a Council Member for HRH The Prince of Wales Campaign for Wool, I have to appreciate that we are the underdogs in this battle for the planet. Many of our members use synthetics in the manufacture of their ranges and I

understand why. Nevertheless, many of those manufacturers are developing brand new ranges that are made predominantly from wool. This is a hugely significant move in the right direction because it shows that our low budget, but absolutely honest promotion of wool and wool products is working.

Manufacturers will produce things that they can sell at a profit, they hate loss making products. When they see real demand in the shops from an increasingly aware consumer for products that are better for so many reasons than synthetic options, the battle is won. I hope retailers do spare some time to look at the reasons why wool is such a great fibre.

The CampaignForWool.org website is also full of information and the scientific facts behind the statements are open to full scrutiny.



You may be interested to hear that in February the Wool Carpet Focus Group held its first meeting for over 2 years. It was hoped that the wool carpet industry would give its thoughts on whether the WCFG still had a role to play and in which direction should it go in the months ahead. It was unanimously agreed that the Group had a strong future.

The vast majority of the industry attended the meeting and those that couldn’t, but still wanted to be heard, sent their support via phone calls and emails. We have noted several key initiatives that special working party groups have been tasked with. I believe we are on the same page and will look forward to seeing a refreshed WCFG website; plans for the 2022 Harrogate Flooring Show presentation; and stronger links to the Campaign for Wool and all the resources they have available via the leading wool producing nations of the world.

I hope William Shakespeare isn’t too upset by my pinching his famous lines but if you were amused, enlightened or otherwise entertained by them I am sure he wouldn’t mind.

Best regards  
Martin Curtis





# For a greener footprint

With a commitment to zero waste, all Ball & Young PU underlays are manufactured from re-purposed trim which can again be recycled at the end of their usable life.

The company you can trust with over 25 years of sustainability and innovation.

**It's in our DNA.**



Scan the QR code to see our sustainability story.

## FIRST BURST OF ONLINE ADVERTISING PROVES A SUCCESS FOR THE CARPET FOUNDATION



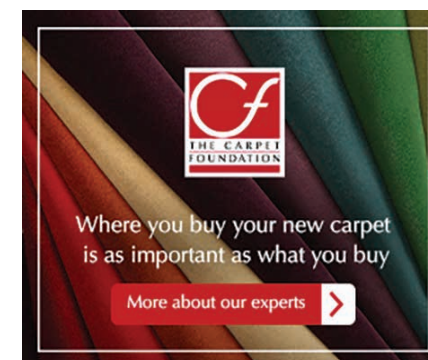
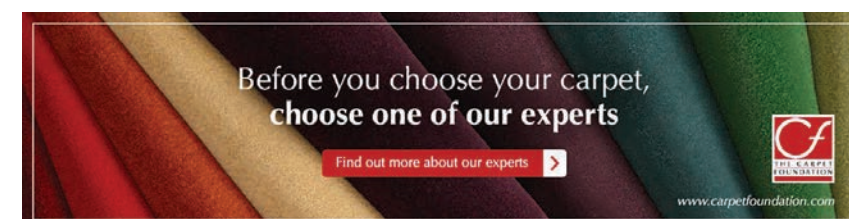
The Carpet Foundation has heralded its first burst of its major online advertising campaign as 'a success'. At the time of going to press, the full report has not been received but from their own Google analytics, the Carpet Foundation can see that searches for carpet foundation retailers on their website were up 58% year on year over the three week period.

The campaign, which ran for three weeks in March, used four leading home interest websites – homesandgardens.com; livingetc.com; idealhome.com and realhomes.com.

Four different advertisements were used, all of which used vibrant and eye-catching imagery with simple yet strong messages.

The call to action was to 'buy from one of our experts' and drove respondents direct to the Carpet Foundation website. The campaign was highly targeted and the advertisements ran on the news and home pages of all four sites and were also placed around key words like flooring, carpet and design ideas to gain maximum impact.

The Foundation plans to run a second burst of the campaign in May, again for three weeks, and then return in the autumn for a further five weeks. In total, 1.5 million advertisements will appear online.



Commenting on this exciting move, Chief Executive Andrew Stanbridge said:

“Online advertising had to be worth a toe in the water as digital is the way forward. You get a big bang for your buck and one a half million advertisements promoting our retailers as the people to buy carpet from is quite a significant campaign.

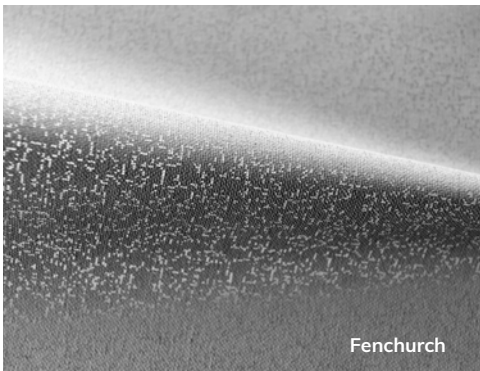
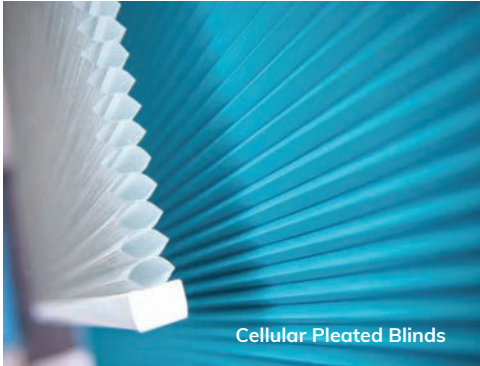
The great thing about digital is that it is highly quantifiable. We will see what ads worked best and also what websites so going forward we will only use what we know works and only the ads getting the best response will be served.

Future is the logical publishing house to run with as not only do they have a broad stable of magazines which enables us to reach consumers of all ages and stages but they are also real digital experts.”

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.



CUT ENERGY BILLS WITH INTERIOR SHADING



Consumers and businesses alike are feeling the squeeze with the latest increases in energy prices and it seems the worst is yet to come. More than 10% of heat is lost through the windows of an average home so now is the time to highlight this problem with clients and show them that their window shading could help them save energy and money.

Motorised Blinds

No longer the preserve of the elite, motorised shading is now ubiquitous thanks in no small part to the smart home revolution of recent years. To discuss motorised blinds whilst trying to save energy may seem counterintuitive but they can be extremely energy efficient. For instance, a typical motorised roller blind with a built-in li-ion battery can run on just two 6-hour charges a year.

With the help of scheduling and routines that are predominantly rooted in apps and other smart home integrations, your blinds can easily be set to open and close at appropriate times to trap or deflect heat depending on the time of year.

Cellular Pleated Blinds

With a honeycomb structure formed from dual layers of fabrics, pleated blinds that utilise a cellular fabric such as Hive or Honeycell create a wall of air pockets that serve to insulate the window. The pockets keep the summer heat from entering a room and, conversely, trap valuable heat indoors during the winter months. This thermal insulation goes a long way to reducing heat loss.

Solar Reflection

Many blind types can provide some level of solar reflection – from a simple white backing on a Roman blind to metallic threads woven into roller blind fabrics that have been proven to reflect up more than 80% of solar heat, so the blinds themselves don't even get warm. Perfect for south-facing windows in the UK.

Recycled PET Fabrics

In recent months and years, there has been explosive growth in fabrics that are made from PET plastics recycled

from products like water bottles. This is also the case in the shading industry. While it's not so much an energy-saving exercise for users, it's certainly appealing to a market that is increasingly mindful of sustainable products and practices. Being indistinguishable from traditional textile materials, clients can meet their environmental goals in style.

A combination of solutions can be employed to suit the needs of residential and commercial properties alike depending on their specific needs, and functionality never needs to sacrifice aesthetics.

To learn more or book an appointment with your local Decorquip representative, call 029 2088 0811 or email [info@decorquip.com](mailto:info@decorquip.com).



NEW BASKETWEAVE FROM BROCKWAY CARPETS

Brockway Carpets has introduced a new Basketweave design option to its popular Lakeland Herdwick carpet range derived from the protected sheep of Cumbria.

LAKELAND HERDWICK BASKETWEAVE



- Grown in Cumbria, spun in Yorkshire and crafted in Kidderminster, Brockway's Lakeland Herdwick carpets are authentically British.
- A sophisticated textured finish made using loop pile of various heights creating a sequenced basketweave design.
- Made of 100% British wool in Herdwick's uniquely natural pigmentation.
- Available in 5 neutral colourways to complement all schemes.
- British Wool Certified.
- As well as providing superior looks and durability, the Lakeland Herdwick range plays a part in helping sustain traditional farming communities in Cumbria through its use of Herdwick wool from sheep native to this region.

As with the rest of Brockway's Lakeland Herdwick loop pile range, the new design is highly durable thanks to the natural resilience and toughness of the Herdwick wool from which the yarn is made.

Lakeland Herdwick Basketweave is a beautiful addition to the Lakeland Herdwick family.

For more information contact Brockway on 01562 828200 [www.brockway.co.uk](http://www.brockway.co.uk)



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# MORE THAN A FEELING

## STAINFREE Aristocat

Add texture and sophistication to any interior with a stunning two tone heathered colour palette.



Featured Image Aristocat Mercury

### Get in Touch

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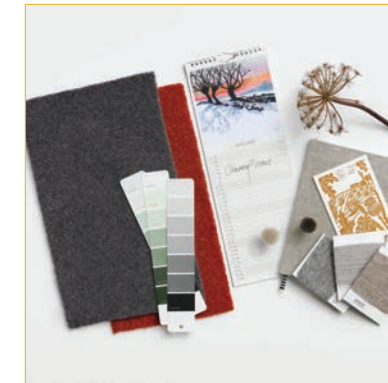
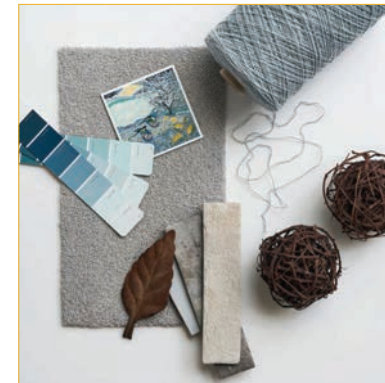
01274 655 694



# ABINGDON

## FLOORING

## FIRST CARPET RANGE TO UTILISE 'WOOL BRITANNIA' YARN IS LAUNCHED



**Manx Tomkinson is proud to launch the first carpet range to utilise the Wool Britannia yarn, named Seasonal Views.**

Wool Britannia is a yarn which has been developed by the Headlam Group Plc in partnership with British Wool and with the support of Campaign for Wool. Every linear metre of the yarn includes wool sourced from farms situated in each of our four nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland & Wales, making it a truly British wool.

The aim of this yarn is to increase the usage of British wool in carpets and, in turn, help local farmers and the planet.

The Wool Britannia yarn, which is manufactured in England, will be launched into multiple ranges of new wool carpets, the first being Manx Tomkinson's Seasonal Views range. Seasonal Views is a new wool twist

carpet range from Manx Tomkinson featuring an exclusive 100% British yarn – Wool Britannia® – sourced from the four nations of our country, spun in Yorkshire and manufactured in Lancashire.

The carpet is treated with Ecolan, which is a non-insecticide product that makes the wool carpet moth resistant. Seasonal Views has 16 colours in its range to choose from and comes in both 4m and 5m widths.

The Seasonal Views range is inspired by the landscapes, the people, our towns, cities and countryside. Seasonal Views features a semi plain and heathered collection of carefully curated colours; perfect for modern living.

The beautiful colour bank ranges from Urban Grey & Back Roads to Coppiced Ash and Homestead; all evoking memories of Seasonal Views across our nation.

Jim Robertson, Chairman of British Wool, commented:

**“This is an exciting project to be involved in and one we are confident will drive demand for genuine British wool carpets. Moving forward, we have been working closely with the Headlam Group for a number of months on this initiative and will be providing ongoing support to ensure the project is a success for all parties, including the British farmers.”**

Read more about Wool Britannia at [www.woolcarpet.co.uk](http://www.woolcarpet.co.uk)

Read more about Seasonal Views at: [www.manxtomkinson.co.uk/range/seasonal-views](http://www.manxtomkinson.co.uk/range/seasonal-views)

Wool Britannia: Headlam Group Plc have been working closely in partnership with British Wool on the Wool Britannia initiative to launch a yarn which ensures 100% of the wool used is from British farms from across the 4 nations.

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

## manx Tomkinson



Award Winning!  
**renu**  
sustainable recycled underlay

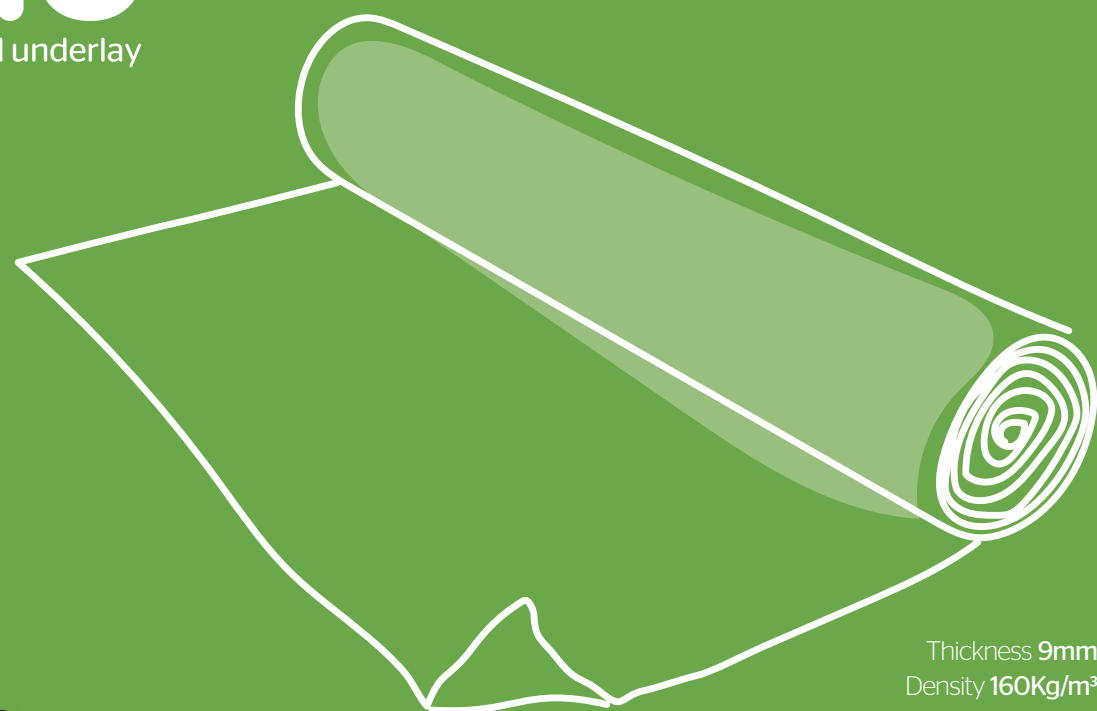
I'm  
green  
BIO-BASED

BS  
CONFORMS TO  
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SUPERIOR  
COMFORT

CO<sub>2</sub>  
SUSTAINABLY  
SOURCED  
PACKAGING

MADE  
IN THE UK



Thickness 9mm  
Density 160Kg/m<sup>3</sup>

From tredaire®

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Made from 98% recycled materials  
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*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®!



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24th - 27th April 2022

Hall 5 - Stand F30

January  
**Furniture  
Show**







# Crofter Loop

BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED

Colour shown: Peat

Inspired by our much loved Crofter cut pile Berber, we are delighted to announce the addition of our **new Crofter Loop** range. Crafted in the UK using premium **100% Wool, 3 ply mothproofed yarn**, and complemented by our traditional sustainable jute backing, this timeless classic is available in the same 9 natural tones as its sister cut pile range. Available in guaranteed 4m and 5m widths, this beautiful carpet combines effortless style with practicality. **Penthouse quality – naturally.**



For samples and further information please call **01706 639 866** or visit **penthousecarpets.co.uk**



*Working for independent retail*  
SINCE 1972



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the furnishing industry's charity



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The Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers' Charitable Funds incorporating the Furnishing Trades Benevolent Association is a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 1015519) and a registered company (no. 02759359) in England and Wales





“

I look back and see that as long as you learn from your experiences you should not have regrets...”

# QUESTION TIME

Michael Turner – Sales Director at Westex Flooring

*In this issue of Question Time, SMG are extremely pleased to feature an interview with Michael Turner, sales director at Westex Flooring. Joining Westex 8 months ago, Michael has taken over the roll of Sales Director from Mark Vale who retired in December. With big boots to fill, Michael is using all of his extensive industry experience to drive the Westex business into the future with a more diverse product offer as well as optimising their existing extensive product range. Michael previously worked for Headlam where he was responsible for developing the Crucial Trading brand from zero to the successful, major force it is today. After 25 years with Crucial Trading, he then worked for Brockway for a spell before joining Westex back at the end of last year. We asked Michael our usual questions and here are his answers...*

**How would you describe the values that have made Westex so successful?**  
It is the insistence on only using the best raw materials to make the best carpet possible and offering a vast breadth of colours that others cannot achieve.

**What are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?**  
Like all businesses, cost inflation is the biggest challenge currently and we look forward to stability so that we can go back to price increases just once a year!

**Independent Retailers are also facing challenges, what advice would you offer them?**  
To remember that the independent offers so much more than other routes, so make sure you let the consumer know about them.

**If you could ask retailers to change one thing, what would it be?**  
Invest in point of sale and spend more on consumer advertising. (I know that's two!)

**How would you like to see the industry change in the future?**  
To be more consumer focussed and thereby gain more of the consumer spend.

**What is your favourite Westex product?**  
Westend Velvet Collection as so few suppliers can make a good wool velvet, but we excel at it.

**Aside from Westex which other manufacturer do you most admire and why?**  
Amtico, as they have created a brand, that consumers aspire to have in their homes.

**What are your career highlights?**  
Taking Crucial Trading from a small plant fibre business into a creative floorcoverings business.

The biggest would be launching Mississippi striped carpet when others told me it was a yarn user!

**Outside of work, what are your passions?**  
Now my sporting days are over it is watching cricket and rugby at every opportunity along with walking my two dogs Mumford and Mylo.

**In your whole life, what makes you most proud/What is your proudest achievement?**  
It has to be my two children; watching them grow, develop and make their own way on life's journey.

**Do you have any regrets?**  
When younger I would have said many but now, I look back and see that as long as you learn from your experiences you should not have regrets.

**What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?**  
Do not be afraid of price!

**How does the flooring industry differ from other industries you have worked in?**  
I am a flooring industry lifer!



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FLOORING EXCELLENCE





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DYE SERVICE

Create your own  
bespoke colour with  
our unique dye service\*

# westex.

FLOORING EXCELLENCE

BARRINGTON LOOP COLLECTION



Standard Colours  
12 to choose from



3 Fold Loop Yarn  
helps prevent crushing



Suitable for Underfloor Heating  
please check with your system  
manufacturer before installation



100% Premium Wool  
natural, renewable, durable  
insulating, soft & beautiful



5 Widths Available  
1m, 3.66m, 4m, 4.57m & 5m  
all widths an exact colour match



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To order samples and visualise your  
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\*For Bespoke Colours a minimum order quantity applies. Special Dyes must meet your approval before full production is started.



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Set up shortcuts, scenes and routines for a truly automated experience

View and control your blinds from your smartphone, wherever you are

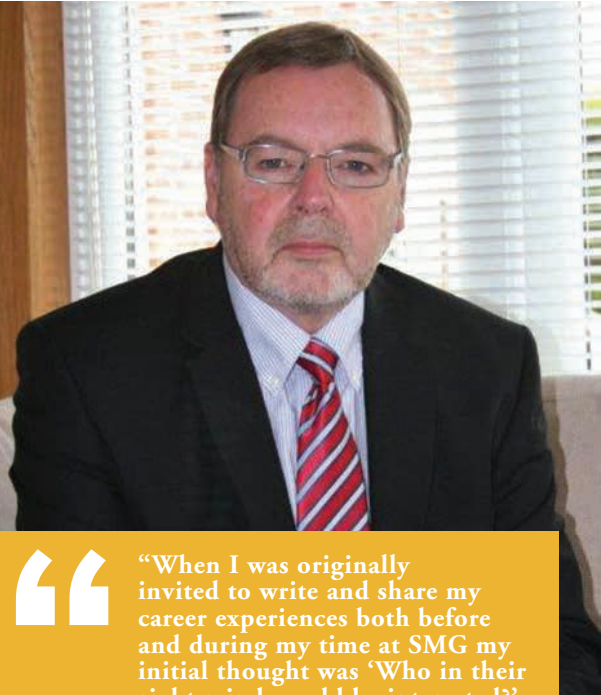
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# style function convenience



# THOUGHTS FROM CHRIS MOFFAT

## Chairman of SMG and Flooring Industry Luminary



“When I was originally invited to write and share my career experiences both before and during my time at SMG my initial thought was ‘Who in their right mind would be interested?’

### In the Beginning...

Having been brought up on a large dairy farm close to the beautiful picturesque village of Yattendon just north of Newbury, I had what can only be described as a fantastic childhood. That said however, I cannot claim that I particularly enjoyed my school days due to the rather distant and disciplinary nature of teachers in the 1950's. I had no idea about what I wanted with regard to a future career apart from dreaming of being a fast jet pilot. I was naturally drawn towards the more practical subjects such as Woodwork, Metalwork and Technical Drawing. My favourite academic subjects were English, History and Geography, which led to me being asked to assist in publishing the Schools' House Magazine. A great result because this enabled me to get my grubby little hands on the schools' new in-house Adana printing machine.

This new found interest in printing had obviously not gone unnoticed and in December 1960, I was approached by the schools' Head Master and asked if I would be interested in accompanying him in a tour of the local Newbury Weekly News print works later that day. I readily accepted this invitation and during the

visit, I met the newspapers' Managing Director who unexpectedly offered me a 6 year apprenticeship as a Compositor. I had just turned 15 at the time and although accepting this opportunity meant leaving school at very short notice without any formal qualifications, I readily jumped at the chance. With my parents' approval and mandatory signatures in place, I commenced my apprenticeship in January 1961. Following my apprenticeship and acquiring my necessary City and Guilds Certificates in Typographical Design at the Berkshire College of Art, I moved on to gain further experience with other commercial Printing Companies.

This eventually took me into publishing at the London based PPL Agency in Shaftesbury Avenue. It was during this period that the printing industry saw a major transformation from traditional 'hot metal' typesetting to 'computer' typesetting and the new art of paper paste-up. It was also the time when I became acquainted with Southern Marketing Group as they had some available space to let in their offices near my home in Tilehurst, Reading. I needed a local office to operate from on a temporary basis due to the disruption

caused through regular train cancellations during the famous strikes in the mid 1970's. SMG had been operating for 6 years by then and produced a single page news letter informing members of the latest discounts and benefits offered by the Groups' Approved Suppliers. This was printed on a small 'troublesome' Ryobi offset litho machine and when SMG learned of my print background, I inevitably got roped in to sort out their problems if I just happened to be in the office at the wrong time. I often wondered how many hours and reams of paper were wasted before they took my advice and scrapped the machine and secured the much cheaper and hassle free services of a local printing company.

### Moving on...

By this stage, I had got to know the SMG team quite well and in March 1975, at the height of the train strikes, it was casually (and possibly jokingly!) suggested that I stopped messing about trying to travel to London each day and join them in an attempt to help build a better and more regular communication platform with their members. Although I had very little or no knowledge of the Furnishing Industry, this approach and challenge did appeal to me and I therefore, agreed

to join SMG as Promotions Executive on the 1st April 1975... *a date that did not go unnoticed in certain quarters at the time!*

My initial 2 years in this 'new to me' industry proved to be an extremely interesting time and a particularly enjoyable learning experience. I travelled extensively around the country with Les Reed, the Group's Director of Marketing, meeting the various management teams of SMG's Approved Suppliers, which at the time were many. Apart from building relationships and gaining knowledge of the individual Companies, my particular role was to encourage them to supply editorial copy for inclusion in the Group's new quarterly house magazine 'SMG News' which I had recently launched.

Famous names such as Gilt Edge, Crossley, CMC, Stoddard, Hugh Mackay, Quayle, Navan, Georgian, Goodacre, to name a few, all with individual manufacturing plants that sadly, have all been decommissioned. Names that are now relegated to the shelf or given to selected ranges within larger parent Companies or the ever expanding Wholesale Distribution sector. Most of these brands were heavily woven orientated and depended on a strong wool supply chain. However, the 1980's and 90's saw a massive growth in the popularity of cheaper carpet ranges featuring man-made fibres such as nylon and polypropylene which put huge pressure on the woven sector. British companies such as Abingdon and Lancaster Carpets thrived during that period and the consumer led trend for cheaper 'Stainfree' type products was perpetuated by the ever increasing surge in imports by European based Associated Weavers, Beaulieu and Balta etc. The woven sector was therefore, hit badly and unfortunately, it was too late (and costly) to change direction.

Another typical example of change during that period was the constant transfer in ownership of many companies. Tredaire for instance, seemed to change hands on a regular basis... The Gates Rubber Company and Uniroyal immediately come to mind. The amalgamation of the individual brands like Tredaire, Duralay and Gripperods also seemed to be a modern trend.

All separate companies originally, with their own individual status within the industry but now predominantly known under the corporate name of Interfloor. Sorry, I digress. The following 8 years allowed me the opportunity to travel the

entire U.K. visiting independent retailers on a membership recruitment drive. The Group's membership expanded into Scotland and Northern Ireland and by 1985, the membership had doubled to over 400 retail outlets nationwide. Keeping members informed of the latest developments within SMG's Approved Suppliers had become a major Group policy which led to Tony Lavers joining SMG as its new Group Development Manager in 1984.

My predecessor was planning to retire the following year and I felt honoured to be invited to become the Groups' Chief Executive when he stepped down in July 1985.

With Tony's help, the SMG team continued to strengthen our relationships with both suppliers and members alike and build on our proven philosophy of supporting and promoting any industry initiatives that benefitted the independent retail sector.

Due to its now nationwide membership coverage, it was decided to change the company's name from Southern Marketing Group to the more apt **SMG The National Furnishing Group.**



In 1989, the Group relocated to larger premises in Theale. This new facility featured more suitable administration offices, showrooms for own brand products, warehousing for samples and display units and additional meeting rooms primarily for the use by Suppliers and their Sales teams.

### Changing Times...

In the 1990's, Kidderminster was still considered to be the heart of the Carpet industry with various trade associations encouraging retailers throughout the U.K. to visit the town and indulge in hugely popular golfing and hospitality events. Fortunately, a number of Kidderminster based manufacturers like Brintons, Victoria, Adam and Brockway



still thrive today and have over the years, become major suppliers to SMG members. Victoria Carpets plc has even strengthened its position within the trade by embarking on a major acquisition trail over the past decade.

The same acquisition trend was witnessed within the Furniture industry with many famous manufacturing brand names being swallowed up by the every expanding Silentnight and Christy Tyler Groups. The closure of so many family owned independent Retail Furnishers in the latter part of the 1980's was a game changing catastrophe as far as SMG was concerned. Many of the original SMG founding members in 1969 were in this category and their unfortunate demise eventually led to the Group becoming very Carpet and Flooring oriented.

A similar trend was experienced within the Wholesale Distribution sector when many individual privately owned wholesaler Companies were acquired by the ever expanding Headlam Group. This scenario continues today by the more recently established Likewise Group.

The huge Multiple Retail sector, obsessed with their '50% OFF' marketing strategies, did not in my view, help this situation. It soon became apparent that most of the major furniture and upholstery manufacturing companies were clamouring to gain the easy high volume orders from the head office based buyers working on behalf of these huge nationwide multiple retailers. It was the same in the retail carpet and floorings sector. Some manufacturers ceased supplying independent retailers altogether which did not go down well at the time.



Mike, Linda & Chris



### The Famous 'Game Changing' Threat...

I clearly remember attending a meeting in London organised by the Carpet Council. Many of you will recall that the Carpet Council was a unique association of like minded industry leaders dedicated to bringing increased public awareness of the positive elements of carpet via a national advertising campaign. This was aimed at combating the growing popularity of wood and laminate flooring which was becoming of major concern within the carpet Industry.

This meeting was attended by senior delegates from a number of prominent manufacturers, the trade press, multiple retailers and various Buying Groups representing the independent retail sector. Rather annoyingly, the commencement of this meeting was delayed whilst we all awaited the arrival of the Chairman of the U.K.'s largest Carpet Retailer of that time.

His eventual arrival was a game changer for all concerned and without even sitting down, he uttered a statement informing the Carpet Council Executive that his company would no longer offer its support due to the involvement of Independent Retailers.

He finalised his short statement with the comment **"As far as I'm concerned, my Company's aim is to destroy and kill off the Independents for good!"** and promptly left the meeting.

This single embittered comment certainly triggered an increased determination to offer maximum support to independent retailers by the Buying Groups and their Approved Suppliers. It was also probably one of the main reasons that the 'all retail sector encompassing' Carpet Council was eventually dissolved.

However, it was a 'declaration of war' as far as I was concerned. It certainly hardened the resolve within all Buying Groups to fight back and I remember penning the headline 'IT'S WAR!' to appear on the front page of the next issue of SMG News with accompanying text informing members of the reason behind this alarming statement.

### Forging Closer Future Relationships...

Whilst still remaining as major competitors, the Buying Groups became much closer and willing to have regular dialogue to discuss the various industry



Neville Cormack OBE



Gerry Lowe



Shaun Lewis with Bridgette Kelly



Simon Dutfield

issues of the day. An informal body entitled The Buying Group Forum was established in the mid 90's which was kindly hosted by the British Shops & Stores Association (now BIRA) when it was originally based in Oxfordshire.

Although this Forum no longer needs to meet, the friendly dialogue between the various Groups is still maintained and enjoyed to this day.

### Legends of My Time...

During my time in the industry, I feel immensely privileged to have been given the opportunity to meet some highly respected individuals.

Hugely admired Company 'founders' such as the late Neville Cormack of Cormar Carpets, Gerry Lowe of Cavalier Carpets, Harry 'The Governor' Dutfield and his son Simon of Axminster Carpets, Tom Clarke of Silentnight Beds and of course, the forever immaculately dressed Bill Lomas of Ryalux Carpets. Sadly, these entrepreneurial legends, along with many 'colourful' characters are no longer with us but their remarkable legacies certainly live on.

The wonderful people I have had the pleasure of meeting over the years are too many to mention in these pages

but nevertheless, they will always be remembered with great fondness for the immense kindness and much valued support afforded to me over the past 47 years. All legends in their own right as far as I'm concerned.

You know who you are and it's always great to see so many of you again at various industry gatherings.

### New Additional Services...

The 1990's also saw a magnitude of additional discount based promotions being offered to the SMG membership by Approved Suppliers aimed at further enhancing retail profitability. A new wave of practical initiatives was also launched including SMG Stockholding and the hugely successful OrderLink 2000 Central Purchasing Scheme, now simply known as SMG Orderlink.

The concept of 'Own Brand' also became extremely popular under the Royal County and County Crest liveries. This concept lives on today with the even more popular 'Pure' branded offering which features a complete in-store display package at very reasonable cost and in many cases, highly subsidised funding.

### Supporting the Industry...

As mentioned earlier, SMG has a policy of supporting generic industry initiatives and I am proud to have been involved over the years in helping and supporting organisations such as The Carpet Council, its successor: The Carpet Foundation, British Wool, Wools of New Zealand, The WoolSafe Organisation, Carpet Recycling UK, The Campaign for Wool and more recently, The Wool Carpet Focus Group. All of these organisations, and more, have played a major part over the years in ensuring the survival of the independent retail carpet sector.



Martin Curtis

For example, recent issues of SMG News have been immensely enhanced by excellent informative articles by Martin Curtis, Chairman of The Wool Carpet Focus Group extolling the virtues of Wool as the number one fibre. Martin kindly invited me to take part in this Group when it was originally formed back in 2013 and I have been amazed by his energy and passion in ensuring that the Wool message is heard by all sectors of the industry and the media alike. Without doubt, Martins' campaign is working and this is demonstrated by the ever increasing number of industry leaders supporting the cause by attending WCFG meetings in Bradford.

It goes without saying, SMG is backing the WCFG all the way and I encourage all Members and Approved Suppliers to read his regular articles in the magazine.

### Life outside of SMG...

Having now been married for over 50 years to a wonderful, tolerant and understanding lady, I feel extremely fortunate to have had the freedom to be able to participate in my many interests outside of work. If it had an engine, I was there; and in my youth, I jumped at any chance to dabble in motor racing, karting and kit car building. Later in life, my interest in anything mechanical evolved into learning to fly and building my own aircraft.

My other passion was music and I enjoyed playing guitar and keyboards in local bands from the mid 1960's until the late 80's. Crazy times and I still remain in touch with friends and fellow musicians from that interesting era! Although those days are now just distant memories, these interests still remain but over the years I have drifted more into the world of DIY and property enhancing projects. Sadly, the only engines I now tinker with are attached to either a ride on mower or a chainsaw... but that's better than nothing I suppose!

### Conclusion...

Apart from the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic, I do feel that the industry has experienced a greater level of stability during the past 20 years especially following the U.K.'s remarkably strong recovery since lockdown. That said however, the one major concern constantly hanging over the heads of traditional 'bricks and mortar' retailers has been the hidden threat of the Internet Trader. As we all know, carpet and floor coverings are not products that can be sold 'in a box' over the counter and due to the complexities of measuring and fitting; the sale still requires a more personalised approach with the consumer. My advice is... 'If you can't Beat 'em, Join 'em!' by creating your own website and online ordering facility. You have nothing to lose and it can only enhance your overall retail presence in an ever competitive market.

Despite these issues, SMG has continued to strengthen its position within the market place by constantly expanding its promotional activity both online and via traditional hard copy mailings. By adopting this policy, I sincerely hope that both members and suppliers alike feel that we have taken the Group in the right and positive direction. Let's hope that the current rise in inflation and the catastrophic crisis in Ukraine do not have a damaging effect on consumer confidence as it would be a shame if these issues stood in the way of allowing the industry to continue to thrive.

Interestingly, on the subject of moving forward in the right direction, I was recently asked...

### "What advice would I give a Retailer starting out in the 2020's?"

#### My simple answer was...

- Ensure that you have gained thorough product knowledge.

- Maintain clean, tidy and well presented internal and external retail premises.
- Be patient and portray a natural willingness to spend time finding out exactly what product is most suitable for your customers' needs before giving the appropriate deliberated advice.
- Invest in a good website, and most importantly...
- Take your shoes off before you enter your customers' home!

Should the same question be asked of me about today's Suppliers; my other simple answer would be...

*"Refuse to employ lazy Reps... End of!"* ...and whilst I have been given the unique opportunity to dish out some advice, may I suggest that both SMG Suppliers and Retail Members alike jump at the chance of gaining extra valuable exposure by submitting an entry to either the annual **National Flooring Innovation Awards** or the recently announced **National Flooring Retail Star Awards** which is sponsored by 'The Stocklists' magazine.



You have nothing to lose and it's 'FREE' publicity if you win your category!

Being bestowed the immense privilege of now acting as the Groups' current Chairman, I continue to enjoy semi-retirement with three generations of family in my new home in the West Country, and whilst celebrating the 47th anniversary of 'April Fool's Day', I know that the future of SMG The National Furnishing Group is in great hands. The Group has an excellent dedicated and experienced team in Mike, Linda, Judy and Wendy, all of whom are acting tirelessly on your behalf.

Sitting here writing and reminiscing, surrounded by my neighbours' green fields filled with grazing sheep, cows and the odd alpaca, I am now starting to feel that I have come full circle and ending up where it all started... Back on the farm!

Finally, I would like to thank you all for making my time in the industry so rewarding and pleasurable. You can be assured that it has been, and continues to be, very much appreciated.

Chris Moffat





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MOST POPULAR SOFT CARPET AVAILABLE ON THE MARKET

iSENSE®

## FULLY UPDATED COLLECTION

iSense® is the embodiment of tenderness and strength, so cuddly yet so powerful.

iSense® is made up of several collections of exquisite and unique broadloom carpet, each in a wonderful range of enchanting colours, offering sheer tactile delight. iSense®: magnificently versatile carpet, bringing softness, comfort and luxury to your bedroom and every other room in your home.

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since 1964





NEW TESSERA TEVIOT:  
COLOURFUL - DURABLE - RELIABLE



Tessera Teviot in Midnight Blue and  
Allura Flex in Bleached Timber



Tessera Teviot in Malt & Meadow



Tessera Teviot in Mid Grey



Tessera Teviot in Neptune & Mid Grey

Manufactured and stocked in the UK, Forbo Flooring Systems' best-selling and well-renowned Tessera Teviot carpet tile collection has been relaunched. Following a yarn and colour palette update, the comfortability, durability and colour retention of the range has been enhanced significantly.

With over 10,000,000 square metres already installed across the UK, Tessera Teviot is Forbo's most popular low level-loop carpet tile range. However, Forbo has decided to make some changes to further improve the performance and aesthetics of the range.

One of the first changes Forbo has made is to the yarn that the collection is manufactured from: it is now solution dyed, as opposed to it being space dyed. This means that the collection has better colour retention than ever before, with colour present throughout the entire structure of each piece of yarn.

Following this yarn update, the weight of the Tessera Teviot carpet tiles has now also increased from 520 gsm to 540 gsm, resulting in improved underfoot comfortability and acoustic value. In fact, the impact sound reduction now stands at 25 dB- ideal for education and office applications, where good acoustics and durability is vital.

What's more, with two new contemporary colour palettes, neutral and colour accents, contractors are sure to find a shade that suits all client design schemes. Within the neutral palette, contractors will find a selection of new grey and brown tones, such as sandy, ecru and dusk, and within the colour accents palette, there is a selection of vibrant shades, including six brand new colours such as clementine, cerise, chilli and blue moon.

Ellen Reith, Marketing Executive at Forbo Flooring Systems, commented:

"Tessera Teviot has been one of the UK's best-selling carpet tile collections for decades. However, to give our customers the best possible product and even better value for money, we have invested heavily in new technical updates, including a heavier pile weight, solution dyed yarn and a brand-new colour palette.

"We are also ensuring that we maintain a lot of stock of the finished goods and yarn, to ensure service levels are excellent and customers can get speedy deliveries from our UK factory."

For more information about the new and improved Tessera Teviot collection, visit [www.forbo-flooring.co.uk/tesserateviot](http://www.forbo-flooring.co.uk/tesserateviot)



BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED, BEAUTIFULLY STYLED

WHAT'S NEW

BATTERSEA  
*Inspired by combining history with modern living.*

We have introduced three new colour additions to our Battersea collection - Vizsla, Schnauzer and Basset.



Design shown: Basset



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)





# Everyday heroes

All-round *Winners* to suit every budget

For more info visit: [interfloor.com](https://interfloor.com)

## Our Brio, Zest, Jazz and Citra underlays have had an upgrade!

We understand the need for underlay that works well in most areas of the home. This upgrade improves the performance of our Brio, Zest, Jazz and Citra products by switching from single-scrim to a twin-scrim design and improving density. Jazz has upgraded from 98kg/m<sup>3</sup> to 145kg/m<sup>3</sup>. Manufactured right here in Britain and made of **100% recycled foam**, they come with the Tredaire seal of quality. From living rooms to bedrooms, the flexibility of our Brio range is made with everyday practicality in mind.

### Underlay tech specs:

**Brio:** 8.0mm, 100kg/m<sup>3</sup> density, 2.2 tog  
**Zest:** 10.0mm, 100kg/m<sup>3</sup> density, 2.6 tog  
**Jazz:** 9.0mm, 145kg/m<sup>3</sup> density, 2.4 tog  
**Citra:** 11.0mm, 145kg/m<sup>3</sup> density, 2.9 tog

**tredaire**  
*It's what's underneath that counts*

## WOOLSAFE GRAND EXPO – THE FIRST EVER 3D-MAPPED INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL TRADESHOW!

WoolSafe is very excited to announce that the first live WoolSafe Grand Expo 3D virtual event will take place Tuesday 26th April to Thursday 28th April 2022. It's going to be a ground-breaking expo so please put the dates in your diary today!

The exhibition will go live at 5pm UK time each day when visitors will be able to navigate around the tradeshow floor and visit the stands of the WoolSafe Licensees and Associate Carpet Manufacturers.

Just like walking onto a stand at a live trade show, visitors can pick up a brochure, talk face-to-face with exhibitor staff, watch a demonstration, and find out about and place any orders.

Look out for special deals during the event!

WoolSafe Grand Expo Free Registration <https://www.grandexpox.com/registration>

[www.grandexpox.com/registration](https://www.grandexpox.com/registration)

From 6pm to 8pm the WoolSafe Grand Expo Stage will have an amazing line up of the top educators in the industry, delivering seminars, workshops and demonstrations and there is also a virtual café where attendees can meet to network and relax.

There are different educational topics on each evening including specialist cleaning of fine fibres and research into treatments on chemically degraded fibres, business development through sales, marketing and networking.



The last evening focuses on infection control and bodily fluid clean-up.

Future Grand Expos will be targeted towards the flooring Industry's interior designers, specifiers and retailers. To find out more about the topics and tutors please visit:

WoolSafe Grand Expo – The first ever 3D-mapped interactive virtual tradeshow!

WoolSafe Academy Grand Expo Educational Programme tickets can be bought from within Grand Expo after Free registration.

For more information, visit [www.woolsafe.org](https://www.woolsafe.org)

contact us on [office@woolsafe.org](mailto:office@woolsafe.org)





## Ready for Spring with new products

At last it's starting to feel like spring, and we have lots of new products on the way to make sure your stores are ready for the new interiors season.

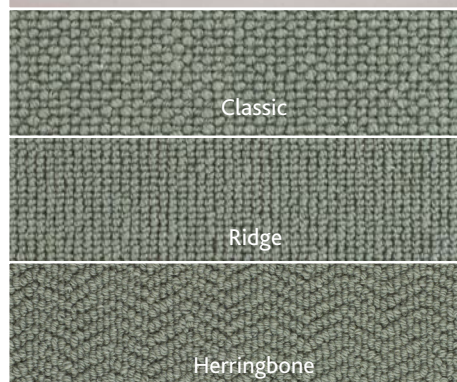
**Crown Twist Imperial and Luxe** (pictured right), which is already one of our most established and loved wool twist ranges has recently had a makeover. An updated colour bank of 36 shades that incorporate neutrals, golds and bronzes along with delicate pastels, perfectly reflect the current interior trends. With a 10 year wear warranty (Imperial) and a 15 year wear warranty (Luxe), Crown Twist is a go to for homeowners looking for a wool blend carpet. This will be available to order as an SMG branded wall unit and lectern as well as Victoria brand under the Tudor Twist range.

**Northern Lights** (pictured below) is the new name for Simply Luxury. Having had a colour refresh, the range now showcases 16 stunning colours, including blues, pinks, greens and neutrals. Now with a 12 year wear warranty, Northern Lights is a great carpet for anywhere in the home.



Northern Lights - Coming soon

Taking our loop offer that one step further, **Habberley** (pictured below) has not only had a pallet refresh, but has also seen two new designs added to the range. A ridge and herringbone join the classic Habberley loop design. 12 elegant tones make up the colour palette, alongside a wool rich blend including Tencel, making these carpets both design and colour driven. This is the perfect carpet for someone looking for that little bit extra from their wool loop.



With so much going on at Victoria, what better way to get product in store than taking advantage of our **Lectern Promotion**.

Either buy Tudor Twist and Habberley and get a Royal Velvet lectern FREE or buy Freedom and Ultimate Expressions and get an Aura lectern FREE, **plus** standholders will also receive a discount of £1.00 per m<sup>2</sup>.

Don't forget there is still time to sign up to be part of our **LVT refresh**. Available to SMG members on special offer with exclusive terms, new easy to read labels, colour coding and product categorisation has been added to help both the consumer and the retailer.

The new collection will bring together Universal and Distinctive products to provide 0.3mm, 0.55mm and 0.7mm offer under the Victoria Design Floors banner. With the exception of Parquet and Tapestry, all products will be available in both dryback and click for the first time, including our new Universal 55 Herringbone. This is a small collection of six woods and two stones as a mid-sized plank.

Available on both a swing arm or on smaller waterfall stands we have point of sale options for stores of all sizes.

Speak to your ASM today to find out more information or to order any of these new ranges.



Lectern  
Promotion  
**3 FOR 2**  
To find out more  
speak to your  
ASM today.



# VICTORIA™

## Carpets & Design Floors

Working in partnership with

# SMG

Crown Twist Imperial and Luxe available now

## Victoria helps Sarah's house become a home.

We're delighted to announce that over the coming year we will be working with **Sarah Beeny** in a series of blogs about carpet, selecting the best product for your space and of course talking about her amazing new house build, which was documented in the new series of 'Sarah Beeny's Escape to the Country'.

We worked closely with Sarah whilst she was selecting the perfect carpet for her home, taking into consideration the family, the requirement for a great colour palette and something that was opulent beyond words - all of these requirements lead her to the Victoria Luxuria Velvet collection which they now have in the bedrooms, music room and on their magnificent stairs as seen below.

The series is available on Channel 4 catch up now.





# Durham Tweed

From Country Retreat  
to Urban Chic

The creation of Durham Tweed was inspired by the blend of shades brought together in the weave of a Harris Tweed jacket.

The range of 16 beautiful colours created to coordinate with any interior, from country retreat to urban chic.

  
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**HUGH MACKAY**  
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*new*  
for 2022

## Durham Tweed

From Country Retreat to Urban Chic

16 Colours • 80% Wool • 4 & 5M Wide  
10 Year Wear Guarantee • Made in the UK

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NORTH EAST & CUMBRIA <b>BECKY GIBBONS</b> M: 07970 491 215 E: rebann2@btinternet.com	LANCASHIRE & NW <b>JOHN ROSTRON</b> M: 07973 733 208 E: johnrostronagencies@hotmail.com	OXFORDSHIRE, WILTSHIRE, HAMPSHIRE <b>ANDREW JEFFERIES</b> M: 07831 457102 E: adj.agencies@gmail.com	SOUTH EAST & SOUTH LONDON <b>DAVE BOWMAN</b> M: 07786 265 072 E: david@dabflooring.com	NORTHERN IRELAND <b>GARY O'BOYLE</b> M: 07831 220 675 E: goboyale@ntlworld.com
YORKSHIRE <b>JOHN ALSOP</b> M: 07860 572 220 E: alsopagencies@yahoo.co.uk	WEST MIDLANDS <b>DEAN STANLEY</b> M: 07572 758 010 E: dssalesagencies@gmail.com	NORFOLK, SUFFOLK, CAMBS, N. ESSEX <b>GAVIN MEREDITH</b> M: 07803 511451 E: gmeredith@hughmackay.com	N. LONDON & HOME COUNTIES <b>DAVE MARNEY</b> M: 07794 221 443 E: d.marney@sky.com	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND <b>LARRY WHITE</b> M: 03862 594 126 E: thelarwhite@hotmail.com



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5 YEARS



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Colour shown: Delta

Colorado is created using a **bespoke blend of the finest wools**, to offer the ultimate in both comfort and durability. We have of course applied our traditional natural jute backing, which is a dream to fit and kinder to the environment. Available in **18 gorgeous contemporary whisper soft tones**, in a choice of 45oz and 55oz, and 4m or 5m widths, this beautiful carpet will be the finishing touch to make any home both welcoming and ultra-stylish. **Penthouse quality...naturally.**



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*Working for independent retail*

SINCE 1972

## MUSEUM OF CARPET SUMMER EXHIBITION 2022 – CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE MUSEUM

The Museum of Carpet is the only museum in the UK dedicated to telling the story of carpet making and exploring the legacy of this global trade, both in the town of Kidderminster and the UK as a whole.



Kidderminster is recognised as the Woven Carpet Capital of the World, the town has been the centre of the carpet industry since the early 1700s.

The Museum explores the social and industrial history, the art and design elements of carpet creation and the science, technology and manufacturing prowess of the industry in the UK. The Museum is also a centre of learning and delivers a vibrant programme of group and school visits, and creative workshops. The collection is accessible for research, education and exhibitions, and is available on-line through the website.

Throughout the year there is a programme of workshops and talks which can be viewed on the Museum website. Groups and schools can book talks, demonstrations and tours to enhance their visit. The collection and library is available for research. There are also a number of modern meeting rooms and conference facilities available for hire. To mark the 10th anniversary, the Museum will be celebrating through exhibiting some of the most magnificent carpets in the collection. The summer 2022 exhibition will draw together designs from the past, present and future of

Kidderminster's carpet design industry. The collection includes heritage designs inspired by Persian carpets and Islamic art, alongside contemporary designs that harness today's technology. There are wild, colourful designs from the 1960s and heavily patterned designs from the Victorian era. The Museum will be partnering with current British carpet companies and their designers to pay tribute to their commitment to producing unique, high quality carpets that sell all over the world.

Harnessing today's technology to create designs that could not have been dreamt of by past generations. Looking to the future, the Museum will be working with Birmingham City University textile department to give up-and-coming textile designers the opportunity to exhibit new and exciting work alongside great designs from the past and designers working today.

The exhibition will run from the start of July till the end of August 2022. Visit [www.museumofcarpet.org](http://www.museumofcarpet.org) to find out more and keep up to date with the latest events, workshops and exhibitions.

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







**One company.  
Five brands.  
Thousands of products.**

## ESSENTIALS

Essentials products offer unbeatable value for money and have been designed with modern and starter homes in mind, proportions that fit and clean simple styling. These collections are perfect for both online and in-store promotional offers.

## ORIGINALS

Our true and tested Originals products continue to offer stylish quality that fits perfectly into family homes. Originals collections offer products with broad appeal and excellent build and finish quality and are ideal for creating beautiful shop floor displays.

## Signature

Signature by Kettle Interiors brings style led, statement pieces paired with exceptional build quality and finishing touches. Signature products let style take the lead and appeal to those looking to take their rooms to the next level. These items will enable you to create stunning shop floor displays that will stop customers in their tracks.

## MAMBO

OUTDOOR LIVING

Kettle Interiors boldly presents the one of our newest brands, Mambo. A top-tier, luxury and stylized range of quality outdoor furniture. This latest range delivers stunning outdoor pieces, from large tables with inbuilt fire pits to roomy lounge style sofa's and so much more in between.

## mint

Mint Interiors is the latest additions to the Kettle suite of brands, bringing hundreds of new products to our customers both existing and new. The collections available under the Mint brands are carefully selected and designed bring high quality, stylish, contemporary furniture and accessories to market that is not just trend led but trend leading.



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## We Offer Professional Services

**SMG Members gain access to the following:**

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- ✓ Free display stands with grass samples.
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Scan now to book  
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## Join Carpet Recycling UK to help make the UK carpet sector more sustainable!

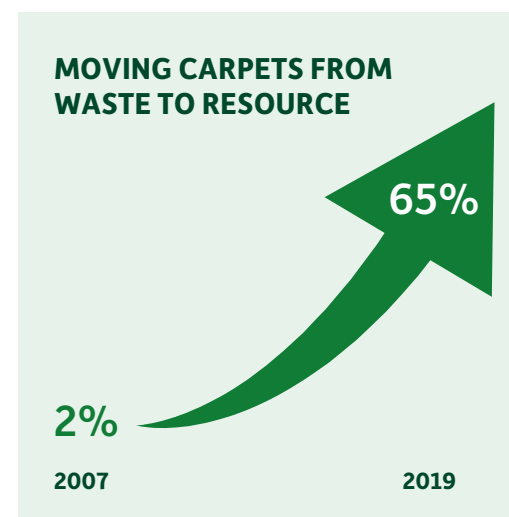
With the help of Carpet Recycling UK, our members and wider network diverted 277,490 tonnes of waste carpet and textile flooring from landfill in 2019, approximately 65% of the total carpet waste arising in the UK. How can you help to increase this?

- C** Carpet Recycling UK is a not-for-profit membership association set up in 2008.
- A** We are an **association** of 115 member companies from across the carpet supply chain.
- R** We **respond** and advise on best practice for reuse and recycling of commercial carpet waste.
- P** We **provide** support and advice to flooring manufacturers, contractors and retailers.
- E** Members are **encouraged** to demonstrate their progress by **entering** our awards.
- T** **Tonnages** diverted from landfill are independently verified and reported regularly.
- W** **Waste** carpet and carpet tiles can be used again, ask us how our members can help.
- A** We **assess** companies' waste to find the most feasible and best recycling options.
- S** We demonstrate and promote **sustainability in design for recycling**.
- T** **Tell** us your story so that we can help you!
- E** Talk to us at our **events** – join our network!

### Contact Carpet Recycling UK

Carpet Recycling UK is a not for profit organisation funded by companies across the supply chain to develop more sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions for carpet waste. Our ability to network with our members and non-members helps to provide you with the most feasible solutions to send your waste up the waste hierarchy and prevent waste being sent to landfill. Please visit our website for more information.

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



## CARPET RECYCLING UK WILL BE AT THE BUYING GROUPS NATIONAL FLOORING SHOW

Carpet Recycling UK is delighted to confirm attendance at the Buying Groups National Flooring Show taking place on 17 and 18 May at Cranmore Park.

It recognised a clear change in attitudes towards sustainable solutions for textile flooring waste from key decision-makers at the 2021 Flooring Show in Harrogate and looks forward to building on conversations with manufacturers and their customers.

At the flooring show, several key manufacturers, including members and potential members, approached the not-for-profit 115-strong membership association for advice on how they can 'make a difference' ahead of any forthcoming legislative/extended producer responsibility changes.

CRUK Manager Adnan Zeb-Khan says: "We are impressed that the sector is concerned about the amount and types of waste being produced and want to reduce this for environmental reasons, and to help reduce costs of disposal.

"Manufacturers were also talking to us about how they are focusing on including more recycled content within their product ranges and designing products with reuse and recycling in mind at the end of life. Raw material suppliers also enquired about how we can help promote their products to our network as they see us as being the right vehicle to do so. Carpet Recycling UK Non-Executive Director Robert Barker commented: "It was great to be back to 'normal' times again at The Flooring Show. It seems that sustainability has moved on considerably during the last two years.

"Manufacturers and retailers alike are realising that not only is there a story that needs to be told about sustainability, but there is also a realisation that sustainability should be built – in-depth – into their culture, products and marketing. This is not an easy change for some, and others have only just started the journey – but the news is positive – and that will be good for floorcoverings in the long term."

Carpet Recycling UK also has greater representation among the non-woven sector, with underlay manufacturers Interfloor and Ball & Young Ltd demonstrating their CSR through CRUK's network and wider outreach. Core funding for Carpet Recycling UK comes from the textile flooring companies Balsan, Betap, Brintons, Cormar, ege Carpets, Furlong Flooring, Gradus, Headlam, Milliken, Shaw and Tarkett, who are taking voluntary producer responsibility for the flooring products they place on the market. We welcome new members for 2022 Gradus and Furlong Flooring, and look forward to helping all customers of our core funders to reduce waste and save money.

Set up in 2008, Carpet Recycling UK helps the UK carpet and textile flooring sector to become more sustainable by expanding and promoting options for reuse, recycling and treatment of this waste, recognising it as a valuable resource, and diverting waste from landfill. According to the latest CRUK figures, the industry is diverting approximately 65% of textile flooring waste from landfill. Around 430,000 tonnes of carpet and textile flooring waste arises annually in the UK. In addition to the BGNFS, Carpet Recycling UK will welcome its members and wider network to a special TWO-DAY LIVE CONFERENCE and Exhibition, Dinner and Awards on 29th and 30th June 2022.

This will be our 12th annual conference and 8th Member Awards ceremony. We are looking forward to seeing lots of familiar and new faces at the newly refurbished well situated voco St Johns in Solihull.

The Conference will welcome and provide dissemination and networking opportunities for UK, EU and international decision makers from across the supply chain. Speakers will discuss achievements, developments, policy updates and technology advances within the sector in relation to sustainability, design for recycling and waste reduction for textile flooring. We are delighted to welcome back keynote speakers Bob Peoples, Executive Director of Carpet America Recovery Effort and Edmund Vankann, Managing Director of the

European Carpet and Rug Association who will provide us with an update on policy developments, challenges and progress at a US and European level. We have also reached out to ADEME (the French environmental agency) to give us an update on their recent implementation of an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme.

We welcome back our MEMBER AWARDS and look forward to opening entry for applications from members who will have the opportunity to demonstrate their green credentials, technical and innovative developments, progress and achievements to us. The Awards will be presented for us by Bob Peoples, Director of CARE at a Dinner to be held on 29th June and we very much look forward to sharing this evening networking with you.

We would like to invite all participants – speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and delegates – to talk to us and be part of the conversation in helping the sector to collaborate and learn from each other at this important event.

- Would you like to consider exhibiting at or sponsoring the conference?
- Do you have any requests for what you would like to see and learn at the Conference?
- Would you like to receive the programme and booking details when they become available?

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



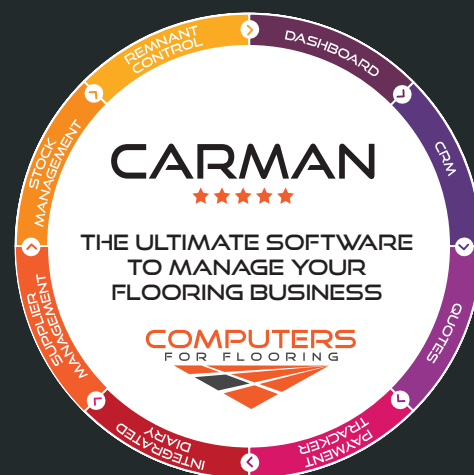




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CarMan will manage the entire sales process from initial customer contact through to order and delivery, with advanced stock management and reporting capabilities. CarMan's central dashboard gives users an overview of customers, suppliers, finance,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

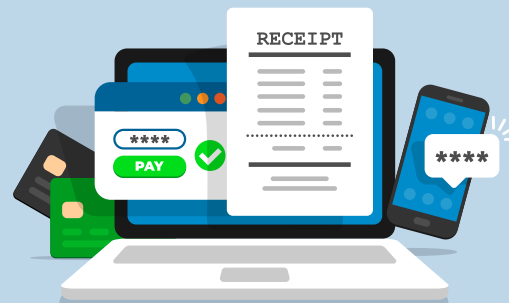


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# SMG MEMBERS FOCUS

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

**MEMBER:** ASHLEY COOKE'S CARPETS & FURNITURE  
**JOINED SMG:** SEPTEMBER 2021  
**LOCATION:** MALTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE

SMG are delighted to feature one of our newer members in this spring issue. Ashley Cooke's Carpets & Furniture are an independently run family business and everyone who works for them is treated like family. The Cooke's have always been involved with flooring, from the fitting side to now an ever growing business in retail, supply and, still fitting of course! Ashley has built this company from the ground up and his expansion throughout Malton is a testimony to how committed he is to creating a great retail experience for all customers.



Paul Cooke  
Head of Sales

“our strengths lie in how we connect with our customers...”



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

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

We feel that being an independent retailer our strengths lie in how we connect with our customers. We are able to give customers a better service and provide a more personal touch when offering advice and support.

## WHAT IS THE KEY MARKET CHALLENGE TODAY?

In today's market we find that the most challenging things are still the most obvious, the rising costs of products and the availability of product for customers.

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

Yes - We actively support British Manufacturers, showcasing several in our showroom!

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

The questions we get asked most frequently have always been:  
'What's your availability?'  
'Do you offer a fitting service?'  
'Do you offer a removal and uplift service?'

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

If we could change anything with our suppliers, it would be for them to support bricks & mortar shops and also create a branding team/representative that could organise their own rebranding within shops.

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

Luxury Vinyl Tile has become one of our most popular products in recent years and we have also seen a big increase in the demand for Wool Carpets, increasing by nearly 300%!

## WHAT WAS THE MAIN REASON FOR JOINING SMG?

Personally, our main reason for joining SMG was to gain availability and access to certain products.

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

Apart from the massive increase in prices...

Customers wanting more choice and wanting their flooring done yesterday!



James & Paul from Ashley Cooke's







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