

Building on promises

The Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) has welcomed the publication of the government's Warm Homes Plan but is calling for urgent clarification from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on how building fabric improvements – including windows and doors – will be supported under the scheme

The Warm Homes Plan has been described by the government as “the largest home upgrade programme in British history”, providing significant investment in insulation, low-carbon heating and renewables – including universal zero, or low-interest, loan-style support for measures such as batteries, heat pumps and solar panels.

Seeking clarity

The GGF says that while it supports actions that help households cut energy bills and carbon emissions, it is seeking greater clarity on where fabric-first improvements sit within the overall framework.

At present, references to windows and doors within the policy document are limited to local authority-led and social housing funding routes. What remains unclear is whether funding will support meaningful retrofit upgrades to existing homes, including the replacement of ageing and inefficient double glazing with modern high-performance double or triple glazing.

Department asked

The GGF says it has contacted the director of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to request urgent clarification on how fabric improvements will be treated under the Warm Homes Plan, and whether future guidance will enable homeowners and social housing providers alike to upgrade existing glazing as part of a whole-house retrofit approach.

Fabric first

Chris Beedel, head of government advocacy and stakeholder relations at GGF, says: “While we recognise the government’s focus on electrification and renewables, we believe that energy efficiency must start with the building fabric.

“Windows and doors play a critical role in reducing heat loss and

ensuring that low-carbon technologies such as heat pumps can operate effectively.

“We are seeking clarity from government on how these essential measures will be supported.”

The GGF is said to be ‘cautiously optimistic’ that opportunities will be presented for the glass and glazing sector, particularly within the social housing and local authority-led retrofit programmes. However, the federation stresses that further detail is needed to understand the scale and scope of

“Energy efficiency must start with the building fabric”

these opportunities.

GGF committed

The GGF looks forward to further engagement with DESNZ and to the additional detail promised in forthcoming policy updates. The federation says it remains committed to working

constructively with government to ensure the Warm Homes Plan delivers practical, effective and inclusive



Chris Beedel

energy efficiency solutions that fully recognise the value of fabric-first improvements. □



Checking the fine print

Eurocell says it is the UK's first systems house to take full control of the window and door specification process with the launch of SureSpec, a fully audited model designed to eliminate gaps between design intent and final installation

According to Eurocell, SureSpec is currently the only fully audited, end-to-end specification system for windows and doors. Its purpose is to ensure that what is specified is exactly what is manufactured, delivered and installed on each project.

The system, says Eurocell, tackles a well-known challenge in the industry where window and door specifications are often inconsistent, recycled from past projects, and frequently fail to reflect modern compliance requirements.

Its launch comes at a time when the need for clarity and accountability in specification has never been greater and is critical to the progress and overall success of projects. Gary Doxey, commercial manager at Eurocell, says: "Regulatory expectations have surged following major updates to Parts L, F and Q of the building regulations, alongside the introduction of the Building Safety Regulator's Gateway process."

Since late 2023, fewer than 11% of Gateway 2 applications for higher-risk new-build projects have been approved, with documentation gaps contributing to delays across the sector – indicating the importance of the issue.

Doxey says: "Meanwhile, the government's incoming Home Energy Model (HEM), replacing SAP, will require project teams to use accurate, product-specific performance and carbon data.

Generic or inaccurate window and door specifications will not meet compliance thresholds – reinforcing why the launch of SureSpec comes at a pivotal moment.

"The industry needs precision, proof and accountability, and Eurocell is taking ownership of the entire fenestration specification process so what's specified is what gets built.

"The window and door specifications we produce as part of SureSpec contain performance, reinforcement, carbon, hardware and testing data that alternative products can't match. Changing to a non-equivalent system after specification, would risk non-compliance, delays and potentially significant costs.

"We believe Eurocell is the only system house with the technical infrastructure to deliver this, meaning we can support social housing, student accommodation, BTR, residential and commercial schemes with a level of assurance that, in our view, can't be matched by other providers.

Full support

"SureSpec has been designed to support every stakeholder involved in the window and door journey:

"Architects receive accurate, performance-led NBS specifications with carbon data already embedded.

"Surveyors are given a complete Eurocell specification with

all reinforcement, loading and integration requirements defined, removing ambiguity at quotation stage.

"Main contractors benefit from locked specifications and clearer accountability, reducing the risk of costly variations or non-compliant installations.

"Fabricators receive window-by-window manufacturing drawings that eliminate guesswork.

"Installers are supported with practical mini-manuals.

"All this is underpinned with an on-site audit carried out by Eurocell, which verifies the installation matches the original design intent.

"In addition to improving compliance and consistency, SureSpec strengthens sustainability performance by embedding accurate carbon and recycling data, underpinned by Eurocell's closed-loop PVC-U recycling capabilities, directly within each specification. This ensures project teams can meet future HEM requirements and support broader ESG commitments.

"SureSpec represents a major shift in specification culture. Launching the scheme is just the beginning. We will continue to expand the audit model, integrate additional digital tools and build on our technical capabilities. This is about embedding a 'do it once, do it right' approach across the industry." □

The Qs and As to A.I

As a multi-million pound commercial installer, with a raft of awards and accreditations under our belt, including the glass and glazing industry's 2025 Customer Care Award, The Window Company (Contracts) is very much a forward thinking, customer focused operation, writes the company chair, David Thornton



We reckon we have always been ahead of the curve when it comes to deploying the latest tech advancements within our business. For instance, we have our own bespoke interactive property database. With more than 58,000 records, we designed our own installation app to replace paper job sheets for surveyors and fitters, and we have caller ID in place linked to the database so we can instantly call up the details of every resident who phones in and give them any information they need.

AI next step

For us – and I'm sure for many other companies – the next area where we're looking to invest is AI. We want to stay ahead of the curve with this as well, but, when it comes to AI, do any of us actually know what the radius of that curve is going to look like?

Mistrust

We are already exploring several interesting applications for AI tools within our business, which go beyond just generating digital content for our

website and socials or minuting our meetings. But at the same time, we're extremely conscious of the lack of trust around AI amongst some consumers about data security, ethics, job impacts and potential for misuse. Will that level of trust increase or decrease going forward?

Possible backlash

We are determined that we won't do anything which undermines – or is even perceived to undermine – the personal customer service which we know our clients and residents really value. Is there a risk of that with AI? After several big news scandals, are we already seeing the beginnings of a backlash against it?

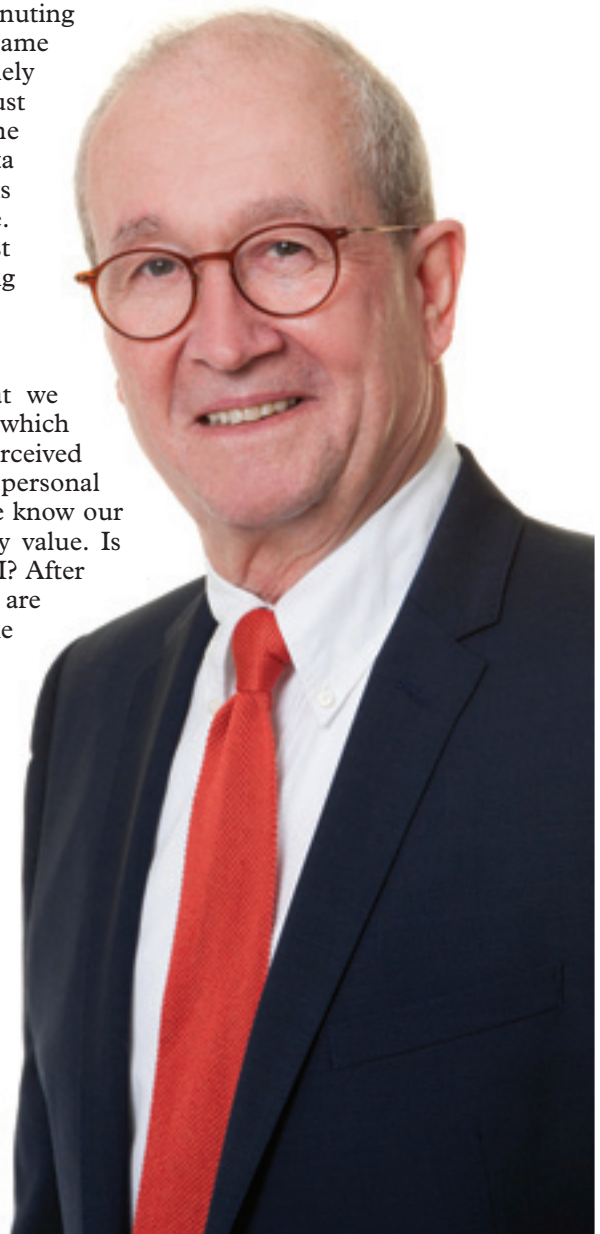
Identify

As I see it, our biggest challenge is to identify ways to use AI effectively so that it enhances our efficiency, but in a way that is received positively by both our customers and our staff. That might be something simple like automating the dozens of calls we make every week to residents to confirm that they are expecting our fitting teams the next day, and then automatically notifying our admin team if any changes are needed so that they can step in and make a personal call.

However, if I think it's essential that we give clear disclosure of our use of AI to customers – how do we navigate that?

Determined

We are absolutely determined to embrace AI and maximise the benefits to our business, but I think it



David Thornton

would be naïve to rush headlong into implementation until we have answered all these questions. I would be interested to hear from other companies about their experiences, and the response they have had from customers. □

The garbage goons

FENSA is urging installers to think carefully about how window and door waste is removed from sites, warning that use of unlicensed 'man in a van' waste collectors can expose businesses to legal, financial, and reputational risk

The warning follows recent reports highlighting hundreds of illegal waste sites operating across England, many linked to unlicensed waste carriers and fly-tipping activity that continues to damage local environments and communities.

Scrutiny

As sustainability and compliance expectations increase across the construction and home improvement sectors, installers are under greater scrutiny than ever to demonstrate responsible waste handling.

However, informal waste collectors, often offering quick and low-cost removal, are still encountered across parts of the industry.

Registration required

According to FENSA, many of these operators are not registered waste carriers and fail to provide legally-required waste transfer notes. In some cases, waste collected in this way is illegally dumped, contributing to fly-tipping and environmental damage across local communities.

Duty of care

Crucially, responsibility for waste does not end once it leaves site.

If materials are traced back, installers have a legal duty of care and can still be held accountable, even if

disposal was outsourced.

Sam Davies, technical manager at FENSA, said the issue is often driven by accessibility rather than intent.

“Most companies are trying to do the right thing,” he says. “The problem is that compliant recycling hasn’t always been easy or affordable to access. That’s exactly what leaves space for unlicensed operators to step in.”

FENSA solution

To address this, FENSA has introduced a free recycling scheme that is available exclusively to FENSA members.

The scheme provides access to compliant recycling routes nationwide for waste generated by replacement window and door projects, including PVC-U and aluminium frames and glass.

Members using the scheme benefit from verified waste handling, compliant waste transfer notes provided with every collection, and clear reporting that evidence material recycled and diverted from landfill – all without increasing business costs.

By removing financial and practical barriers, FENSA aims to support installers in choosing compliant disposal routes while protecting their businesses, their reputation, and the environment.

Access to the FENSA recycling



Sam Davies

scheme is managed through the FENSA installers portal, where installers can request collections via the benefits page to ensure waste is collected, tracked, and processed through approved recycling partners. □