

Brew Relay To Tackle Mental Health Crisis

Fix Radio has launched the Grand Builders' Tea-Lay, the UK's first ever national builder's brew relay to tackle the crippling mental health crisis in the trades.

The Tea-Lay will see one tea mug travel across the UK through live Fix Breakfast handovers from 16 to 26 March

Construction workers are around four times more likely to take their own lives than the national average. 84% of UK tradespeople say they've experienced anxiety or depression.

58% have never spoken to anyone about their mental health, citing embarrassment, pressure to 'get on with it' and fears over job security

As the UK's only national station for builders and tradespeople, the station is using a familiar part of site life, the builder's brew, to create a live, listener-led check-in that encourages tradespeople to pause, speak properly, and ask one another how they are really doing.

Tea-Lay is a live, listener-led mug relay travelling from site to site across the UK over ten days, connecting tradespeople in different regions through a series of on-air handovers during the Bald Builders Breakfast Show. Designed to cut through the silence that still surrounds mental health in the industry, the campaign turns a familiar part of site life into a practical prompt for conversation.

Brad Hanson, host of the Bald Builders Breakfast Show said: "We're excited to get this on the road. It's all about bringing the trade together and sparking those chats that might never have happened without the excuse of a brew and a bit of banter and we're going to have a lot of fun doing it. Our listeners are already delivering the laughs, with hilarious entries to transport the mug via everything from unicycles and motorbikes to flatbed lorries."

The Grand Builders' Tea-Lay runs from Monday 16 March to Thursday 26 March, with



selected listeners becoming official Mug Bearers who each hold the mug for 24 hours before passing it on to the next tradesperson. At every handover the two Mug Bearers take time to check in with each other, with parts of those conversations shared live on the Fix Radio Breakfast Show. Those moments sit at the heart of the campaign.

By broadcasting them live, Fix Radio shows what a simple, stigma-free check-in can sound like in the language of the trades, direct, honest and grounded." [f](#)

Emplas Makes Top 100

Wellingborough based trade fabricator, Emplas, has been listed as one of Northamptonshire's leading privately owned companies for the fourth year in succession.

The Northamptonshire LTD 2025 report, which lists the county's 100 leading privately-owned businesses, ranks Emplas' parent group among the region's top 40 firms – and among the top 30 fastest growing.

Designed as a showcase for the 'scale, resilience and adapt-

ability' of Northamptonshire's most successful privately owned firms, this year's analysis commended a business community that 'continues to perform strongly, even as economic uncertainty, cost pressures and policy change reshape the operating environment'.

Ryan Johnson, the managing director, Emplas Group, says: "Despite tough conditions across the board, Northamptonshire's top 100 privately-owned businesses collectively generated £10.1bn in turnover, with



year-on-year growth of 3.6%, and we're proud to be a part of that.

"Trading conditions were even tougher than expected last year, with inflation, interest rates, tax hikes and project backlogs all big hurdles to overcome, yet we continued to forge ahead by innovating and investing." [f](#)

The Challenge Of Rising Operational Costs

The glass industry faces big challenges as we settle into 2026, writes Mark High, a director at Ecoglass.

Whether it's raw material, electricity or admin, the costs increase, the market remains at saturation and the pressure is felt throughout the supply chain.

Let's take the recent rise in silver. For glass, it has shifted from a footnote to a headline issue in just a few short years. Silver surged in 2025, with prices rising somewhere between 130–170% within a 12-month period.

This cost flows directly into Low-E coated glass, a product we have long recommended as the ideal standard for thermal efficiency and regulatory compliance.

Yet the very energy-efficient glass endorsed by regulation is becoming increasingly expensive to produce, precisely because of the material that makes it effective. When we factor in the

more advanced double and triple-silver coated variations, which are increasingly being specified to combat unseasonably hot UK summers, we are left grappling with the balance between cost, value and viability.

Silver is not a luxury component in Low-E coatings – it is a physical necessity. It cannot be engineered out without compromising the performance the product is designed to deliver. That is rarely an argument homeowners are willing to accept.

Tempering, processing and production all depend on high volumes of electricity, it is far from a discretionary overhead. Electricity is a core input cost, one that continues to rise.

The cumulative impact of rising raw material costs, electricity prices and increasing operational complexity is felt across the entire supply chain. Upstream, float



glass manufacturers pass increased costs downstream. Fabricators, installers and developers are left opening emails and calculating how much more they can absorb before their own viability is compromised.

We do not claim to have solutions that others have somehow overlooked. We are navigating the same environment as every other IGU manufacturer. What is becoming increasingly clear, however, is that this cannot be treated as a private problem for individual businesses to manage in isolation. [i](#)

GDPR Rules Raise Compliance Stakes



Insight Data is warning businesses about changes to UK data protection rules that came into force on 5 February 2026.

Insight is the UK's leading

provider of compliant B2B marketing data for the glazing and construction sector.

These updates to GDPR and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) increase the risks for companies contacting installers, contractors and suppliers without the right processes in place.

GDPR sets out how personal data about individuals can be collected, stored and used. PECR governs electronic marketing, including email, phone and SMS – and even fax.

While the latest updates do not

overhaul the law, they sharpen enforcement and increase penalties. PECR fines now match GDPR levels, reaching up to £17.5 million or four per cent of global turnover. This is a major concern for businesses that rely on in-house sales teams and marketing lists.

Insight Data helps businesses reduce that risk. By collecting and managing data on behalf of customers, the company ensures marketing activity complies with GDPR and PECR. The company's experience allows companies to continue reaching prospects safely and effectively. [i](#)

College To Build Tomorrow's Fenestration Workforce

As the demand for skilled and manufacturing technicians continues to rise, Eurocell is searching for eight new apprentices.

The programme will run at the company's main manufacturing site in Derbyshire in partnership with West Nottinghamshire College.

The initiative will support the training and development of the next generation of manufacturing and engineering technicians, ensuring Eurocell's production lines remain at the forefront of emerging extrusion technology while also addressing the sector's ongoing skills gap.

Employment challenge

It comes as almost all manufacturers (98%) agreed in a recent survey that hiring and retaining skilled team members is a key challenge, while Make UK finds that around a third of all vacancies in the industry are hard-to-fill due to a lack of skills, qualifications or experience in the candidate pool.

Apprenticeship Levy

Supported by the Apprenticeship Levy, the programme will see eight Manufacturing Extrusion Technician apprentices benefit from off-the-job and on-the-job training using industry-standard equipment and processes at Eurocell. Apprentices will also benefit from attending training sessions at West Nottinghamshire College's state-of-the-art Gene Haas Centre for Advanced Manufacturing in Sutton-in-Ashfield, a purpose-built facility for engineering and manufacturing students.



Andrew Cropley MBE, Principal and Chief Executive, West Nottinghamshire College said: "We are very proud to be working in partnership with Eurocell, bringing exciting opportunities for local people to become future shining stars in the engineering industry. This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to supporting the regional economy, boosting high-level technical skills, and creating clear progression routes for those embarking on rewarding careers in this critical sector."

Local talent

The 18-month long programme offers local talent a clear pathway into industry. Apprentices will develop competencies across polymer extrusion operations, engineering, process optimisation, health & safety, quality assurance and continuous improvement methods. This structured approach – aligned throughout with modern processes and quality standards – is designed to set up apprentices for a successful career in manufacturing.

Joy Naylor, Eurocell's Director of Manufacturing and Recycling

at Eurocell, added: "We recognise the importance of addressing growing skills gaps in the East Midlands, especially for specialist extrusion, manufacturing and engineering technician roles. That's why we're investing in apprenticeships to build a core team of future experts equipped with the skills and mindset to adapt to emerging technologies and the evolving demands of modern manufacturing."

The programme reinforces Eurocell's long-term commitment to sustainable manufacturing and technological innovation, while also supporting the wider region's industrial resilience into 2030 and beyond.

Recruitment is set to begin in spring 2026 and continue throughout the year, with all successful applicants expected to start their apprenticeship studies in September 2026. 

Interested candidates can register their interest now via the Eurocell careers site: www.careers.eurocell.co.uk

Pictured: The team behind the scheme.