

# A Yawning Gap In Recognising Fatigue

Is the glazing industry recognising and tackling tiredness at work? asks Phil Pinnington of the Glass & Glazing Federation

**In a recent report a remarkably high number of respondents from the construction industry confessed to having reduced or disrupted sleep.**

It is by no means surprising in the 24/7 world we all live in. The pressures are greater on those large projects with a web of inter-connecting trades all working to very tight deadlines – but that doesn't mean that smaller builds in our industry need not be concerned.

## Caught napping

There are plenty of studies that have shown the impact a lack of sleep or disturbed sleep can have on employees. A lack of attention, a need to supplement that lack of energy with caffeine or other energy booster drinks or in many cases catnaps.

So, how responsible should you be as an employer?

Firstly, I'm not suggesting you start questioning your employees daily about how much sleep they've had. This is none of your business, however, it is advisable to raise the issue and how it can affect both their work and social activities.

Make them aware of their responsibilities. After all, if you are paying someone to come to work they owe you a duty to be suitably fit to do the work. They may have medical conditions such as sleep apnea and thus you need to make reasonable adjustments.

## Hazards

Having an employee suffering from fatigue and sending them to drive an hour to site before starting physical work building a large conservatory or installing windows at multiple levels, all pose a huge hazard to the employee and has ramifications for you as employers.

## Addressing concerns

It makes sense to address these concerns. It is an area we at the GGF have been raising with members in recent months. We have been highlighting these issues as they form part of the HSE Wellbeing Agenda. This campaign covers a range of topics including mental and physical health. Stress and fatigue play a vital part in this. I have been encouraged by how many in our industry have recognised and taken action to discuss wellbeing with their employees.



## A good example

A company that has already started work in this area is The Window Company (Contracts) Ltd, coincidentally the first member to receive the Gold Status award of the GGF GLASS Charter Merit Scheme. The award was in part recognising the work they had done to make wellbeing part of the business model. They have adopted processes in an effort to make their employees feel safe in discussing health conditions. The business understands how this investment is good for their workforce and in turn for the business. [i](#)

