

285 Construction Businesses Topple In A Month

The Insolvency Service has reported that construction companies have been going out of business in their hundreds with one month seeing 249 collapses, with the following seeing a whopping 285 fail.

Although the figures related to September 2021 (the Insolvency Service is notorious for being slow to produce its stats), the headline figures are still a warning to companies in the sector and those who supply them, that going bust when the going gets tough is happening far too frequently for comfort.

Pressures on construction have been mounting. These include the runaway inflation of many key building materials and a lack of skilled workers post-Brexit. The cost of materials is not rising as sharply and in some cases a lack of demand has seen materials go into negative inflation. But material costs have hit profit margins in an industry

where margins were already very tight.

Many contractors have struggled to pass these additional costs on to clients – a factor quoted in insolvency cases.

The repair, maintenance & improvement market is holding up on the back of lower material costs and being able to pass on cost increases. The new build market is based on longer term commitments and main contractors who don't want to accept increases and in many cases are asking for the price of bids to be reduced mid-contract.

Earlier this year, timber traded at all-time highs. Other commodities including steel and cement have also seen significant inflation. Brexit has also seen wages in the construction sector driven up by a shortage of skilled tradespeople, including window installers, carpenters, bricklayers, and plasterers.



Rebecca Dacre, a partner in Mazars's restructuring and advisory service reports that building contractors are being hit from all sides. She says: "They are managing supply chain chaos, spiralling inflation and a vanishing pool of workers. Together these are ramping up the financial pressure on the business. For some, the burden is too much and it is pushing them under."

Other issues affecting firms include overtrading, where contractors take on too much work too quickly and suffer from a lack of cash flow to complete the work; and significant tax bills deferred under 'Time To Pay' arrangements. HMRC is still open to establish further arrangements. [i](#)

MFT At Housebuilding Shows

For homeowners' planning an extension, self-build or refurbishment, Made For Trade believes the Homebuilding and Renovating Expo series has generated great leads in recent years.

Made For Trade is the firm behind the Korniche Lantern Roof, Flat Skylights and Bi-Fold Door brand. Plans are already underway to showcase the them again at the regional Harrogate event and then at the national show at Birmingham's NEC.

In 2023, Made For Trade was supported by trade brand

ambassador, TV presenter and recognised tradesman, Mark Millar. Having had first-hand experience of Korniche products, Millar advocates for the time-saving measures and high-quality engineering, clever design and ease of use of each item. For the consumers and fitters alike, Millar's excitement and knowledge of the quality of these products, imbues them with confidence in the Korniche brand. The Homebuilding and Renovating Shows aim to provide attendees with practical tips, inspiring advice and the lat-



est products to support them in self-builds and renovations alike. 26,00 people turned up to the NEC last year. [i](#)

Dempsey Dyer's Digital Grant Helps Efficiency Gains

Dempsey Dyer has applied and then used a government backed Digital Enterprise (DE3) Funding grant to bring its operating systems in line with its window and door manufacturing.

The business support resulted in an immediate £50,000 costs saving and the company is now poised for growth thanks to an efficient new business model.

Meanwhile, reduced admin has led to increased employee satisfaction and improved staff retention.


Dempsey Dyer, which is based in Yorkshire, had become aware that the technology that supports the business had evolved and it needed to adapt to ensure its long-term sustainability.

DE3 has been empowering established businesses across West Yorkshire to innovate since 2016.

Its expertise, impartial advice and grant funding has enabled many firms to invest in solid technology solutions, which have helped to build foundations for growth through to a total digital transformation.

The £7,000 grant allowed Dempsey Dyer to remap its processes, leading to significant efficiency gains. Streamlined processes not only reduced the workload for staff but also enhanced job satisfaction by eliminating time-consuming administrative tasks. Cutting demand for paper trails, reduced environmental impact.



Systems Manager Mark Suaznabar says: "The efficiencies we've been able to develop have streamlined the processes in our stores and accounts departments. But rather than making our workforce smaller, we've reallocated roles and responsibilities to our team. By removing constrictive methods, team engagement has soared." 

Whitesales' Demo Truck Hits The Road

The new Whitesales 'Fenestration Team' has a brand new Demo Truck polished and ready to hit the road.

From this month, it will be bringing product demos, training and support direct to fabricators, installers and trade counters across the UK.

Featuring fully assembled versions of both the Whitesales em.glaze flat glass electric rooflight and the em.glaze Skyvu lantern, the truck gives customers the chance to get really hands on with the products.

There is a 40in digital screen on board for presentations and how-to videos; and lots of sam-

ples to illustrate product and colour options.

Both Karl Grandfield and Piers Whites from the team will be getting behind the wheel. Grandfield says: "The truck will massively enhance the customer experience – it's not just about taking the products to the prospects, it's also a good way for us to deliver face to face demos and training."

Whites says: "We think the truck will make a great addition to any customer event or open day and help us spread the word about how easy it is to



make money from our rooflights.

"Anyone who wants to arrange a visit can email: sales@whitesales.co.uk and we'll be in touch to fix the date." 