

A Sliding Door For Future Homes

The Future Homes Standard may be on everyone's minds, yet it is important not to lose focus elsewhere. We talk to aluplast's director of sales Ian Cocken to find out more – and take a first detailed look at the company's Smart-Slide neo sliding door.

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Some suppliers will be hoping for a Future Homes Standard reprieve – a delay to allow for more time to develop products that will achieve the low U-values required. But that is unlikely according to aluplast's Ian Cocken.

Despite Rishi Sunak reneging on some strategies, the Future Homes Standard (FHS) is too fundamental to the net zero 2050 target and to the goal of decent homes, for it to be tempered. The Standard has not been completely written yet but currently requires newbuild developers to demonstrate a 31% reduction in their carbon emissions from 2024. As a result, from 2025 it is expected that windows and doors in

newbuild properties will have to achieve U-values of $0.8W/m^2K$ or lower.

Lower values in demand

"While the standard will only affect newbuild homes, it is likely that the standard will have repercussions throughout the rest of the industry," says Cocken, who is aluplast's director of sales. "The cost of energy is still very high. We know that many homeowners see their windows as a straightforward and effective way of improving the thermal efficiency of their homes. If they know they can get lower than $1.4W/m^2K$, then they will want to.

"This will make sub- $1.0W/m^2K$ windows the norm and it will put pressure on

window companies to offer that across their whole range."

Other demand factors

Thermal efficiency is only one part of a bigger system of competing forces, Cocken argues, which includes design choice, weather performance and security. "It's not unusual to see how developments in one area have a negative impact on another," he says. "We avoid this trap at aluplast, creating products that create opportunities in all areas, not just one."

Smart-Slide neo sliding door

Cocken adds: "A case in point is our new Smart-Slide neo sliding door. With Passive House levels of performance,



making it FHS ready, this door immediately offers a route in for companies involved in newbuild, refurbishments and extensions.

"But we are also allowing PVC-U companies to compete alongside aluminium in terms of design reach and aesthetics."

Smart-Slide neo has a contemporary minimalist design with slim sightlines and can achieve widths up to 6m and a height of 2.5m with just two panels, helping designers create desirable openings with limited visible profile.

Colour choice

Smart-Slide neo can be finished in smooth Anthracite grey via an Aludec foil that is designed to accurately replicate the look and feel aluminium. This finish is one of 40-plus colour options, which help to meet the current significant demand for colour from homeowners looking to create a contemporary look to their home.

Performance

"Smart-Slide neo doesn't miss a beat on weather performance or security," Cocken says. "Thanks

to hardware from either Roto or Maco, rollers can accommodate individual sash weights of up to 200kg, while allowing the user to open and close the doors effortlessly.

"In the 'fully locked' position, a mechanism pulls the sash onto the meeting stile to provide excellent performance for both air/water permeability, meeting BS6375 for weather tightness, while achieving PAS24 for security."

Security

Cocken believes security is a key selling point for garden doors. He says: "Energy efficiency maybe high on the agenda in the lead up to the implementation of the FHS but security is an unmoveable concern. Suppliers lose out if this cannot be demonstrated.


"A PVC-U slider, achieving up to 6m-wide openings, while boasting security, thermal and weather performance, is practically unheard of."

Suite spot

Cocken adds: "The colour options also help the Smart-Slide

suite with our Ideal 70 and Ideal 4000 window systems. And with our flush casement and flush outward-opening door, homeowners and developers can achieve a suited appearance across a whole project with clean modern lines or heritage detailing, without having to turn to aluminium.

"Design wise, that's a big win – but you are also ticking boxes for energy efficiency, price and sustainability thanks to our Ecotech profile, which utilises recycled PVC-U without compromising performance or aesthetic.

"Smart-Slide basically removes any concerns you may have regarding FHS, while allowing you to compete with aluminium at the high end," concludes Cocken. "It is definitely a timely product and a product of the times." 

Pictures: aluplast's Ian Cocken says the company's new PVC-U Smart-Slide neo sliding door meets the expectations of the Future Homes Standard and comfortably competes with aluminium alternatives.

Garden Rooms And The Window Of Opportunity

With remote working or hybrid working becoming the norm for many white-collar employees, lots of homeowners are seeking ways to adapt their living spaces to accommodate home offices and workspaces. In this article, written in association with UK Doors Online, we examine the trend – and what can be done to capitalise on it.

With more people working from home, the desire for more space is on the rise – and garden rooms with thermally efficient windows and glazed doors are in hot demand.

They can be the office; or they can be the leisure space homeowners escape to; or they can incorporate a bit of both.

According to recent research, a remarkable 16% of homeowners

are eager to embrace the benefits of a garden room.

Adding value

A garden room adds significant value to properties as well, with the average increase being 12%. In this article, we explore why homeowners should consider installing a garden room and how UK Doors Online doors can elevate the investment return to even greater than that 12%.

The garden room revolution

One of the most attractive features of garden rooms is how they blend indoor and outdoor living, achieved through the use of smooth and easy-to-operate bi-folding doors, French doors or sliding patio doors. These doors not only provide access to the garden but also fill the interior with natural light, creating an inviting and refreshing atmosphere.



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Weather-resistant comfort

Garden rooms are incredibly versatile additions that are suitable for all seasons, provided they are properly insulated – and energy-efficient doors and windows obviously play a big part in this both in keeping out the chill of autumn and winter and the heat of spring and summer. One of the features of UK Doors Online doors is energy efficiency, with U-values starting at 1.4W/m²k.

UK Doors Online doors are crafted from aluminium which not only provides durability but also resistance to weathering. Additionally, their robust construction offers solid security performance to provide homeowners with the peace of mind that although their garden room is divorced from the main property, it will resist attempts to break into it.

Easy install

Installers want easy to install products – and their clients don't want to be calling their installer back to correct faults.

UK Doors Online says it is currently recording a non-conformity rate of just 1% on all of its installs, while in June of 2023, it had no callbacks or site visits to fix any faults what-so-ever – saving installers valuable time and money.

Integrated blinds

For added convenience and customisation, UK Doors Online offers the option for integrated blinds on French doors, single glazed doors, sliding patio doors and bi-fold doors. These not only provide an extra layer of privacy but also serve as cooling elements during warmer weather and energy savers during the colder months.

Conclusion

The growing demand for garden rooms is a testament to their transformative impact on modern homes. With the ability to increase property value by an average of 12%, these versatile spaces offer possibilities for homeowners seeking to expand their living spaces and adapt to the evolving demands of remote work.

Installers can provide the complete install of garden rooms or stick to the bit they are most familiar with – the installation of quality doors and windows and make good margins whichever route they take. [i](#)

Pictures: When it comes to garden rooms, there is plenty of opportunity for installers to complete the full project or just install the windows and bi-fold doors.