

INNOVATIONS

CHRISTOPHER SYKES SUMMARISES SOME NEW PRODUCT INNOVATIONS, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL CLAY, A NEW PARKING SYSTEM AND STRAW BALE INSULATION.

'INNOVATIVE' CLAY IN ACTION

Wetherby's EpsiBrick-7 is a new 7mm brick slip system that offers the appearance of real brick, without the high costs and lengthy installation times associated with traditional brick builds. It is EpsiBrick-7 product is manufactured and fired in the same way as traditional clay bricks, providing a genuine brick finish.



Unlike Wetherby's 15mm brick slip system, which has been installed on hundreds of social housing projects across the UK, the new BBA Approved product does not require the use of a galvanised steel mesh. Instead, the brick slips are applied directly onto the base coat, significantly reducing installation costs. Currently available in 13 different colour finishes, the EpsiBrick-7 system ensures there is a product option to match effectively any existing brick property. www.wbs-ltd.co.uk

• Clay is also in the news because Marley Eternit has brought back traditional craftsmanship with the launch of their new Canterbury clay tiles. The Loxleigh handmade plain tile has a subtle variation in colour, ranging from red to grey and black with a sanded finish that gives a premium antique reclaimed appearance. The Burford has a rich red-brown tone in a fully sanded texture, which adds warmth and character to the roof. Finally, the Chailey has a vibrant orange tone with a sandfaced texture that can be used on the main roof and is a perfect contrast tile for vertical detailing.

In addition, all three colours can be mixed on the roof to give a unique patchwork of colours that is often seen on traditional roofs in Suffolk, Sussex and Kent. www.marleyeternit.co.uk



• With the shortage of bricks – reckoned to be about half a billion a year with a nine month lead time - it's worth a mention of the innovative Gebrik Insulating Brick Cladding System, supplied by Aquarian Cladding Systems Ltd. With over 500 different clay brick slips and a range of sizes and bond patterns (including stretcher, stack and Flemish options), this provides an authentic brick finish. As it is a panelised system, i.e. manufactured in factory-controlled conditions, precise colour blends and consistency of colour match are assured – without having to rely on the bricklayer to make aesthetic judgements on site. The lightweight, non-loadbearing system may be fixed directly to the substrate of buildings up to 18m high. www.aquariancladding.co.uk

MORE SPACE WITH INTELLIGENT PARKING

The innovative Cardok hydraulic lift system facilitates a more effective use of limited parking space, particularly within brownfield sites where home builders can maximise development space that would otherwise be taken up by cars.

This Swiss-made system is designed to accommodate one or more cars below ground with vehicles parked on top. As well as doubling the amount of home parking space, it offers far greater security than a conventional garage. Engineered to the highest standards, it operates by hold-to-run remote control and quietly raises or lowers in less than 30 seconds. All are built to order in standard design sizes but can accommodate variations.



Any estate agent will confirm that a parking space is the single biggest selling point. Cardok believes the solution lies not in banning cars from suburbia but in clever building design that incorporates more imaginative parking solutions, including underground parking. The cost of new Cardok models compares very favourably with the cost of a new build garage. www.cardok.com

STRAW BALE INSULATION

The first straw bale housing development has just gone on sale. This comprises seven Bristol townhouses built by developers Connolly and Callaghan using the innovative 3.2m by 2.9m ModCell straw panels, in which an engineered timber frame encloses the compressed straw bale insulation. This product was a 2014 winner in the Sustainable Housing Awards.



Constructed with the load-bearing straw panels within an airtight design (plus triple glazed windows) the new houses will need significantly less conventional heating. Their super-insulated straw walls provide three times' greater insulation than required by current UK building regulations so fuel bills are anticipated to fall by up to 90%.

The straw bale system was developed by University of Bath and has received BM Trada's Q mark certification, meaning developers and house buyers can now insure and secure mortgages against homes, schools and offices built using this sustainable construction method. www.modcell.com

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