



building today

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION

Sustainable housing features in remote House of the Year location

Quinn: Not time to party just yet ...
New guidelines to prevent falls on site
DBH speeds up Christchurch rebuild



Inside: Win a Showerdome!

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Win an installed Showerdome worth over \$400. See page 23

building today

This issue of *Building Today* unveils one of the success stories of the 2011 Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year — InHaus Development Ltd's entry that won the Nulook Builders Own Home and the BRANZ Sustainable Homes under \$500,000 categories.

This holiday home in remote Abel Tasman National Park is not connected to any services and can only be accessed by boat.

Read about this unique project and how it was constructed on page 7.

Elsewhere, we feature the huge effort in Canterbury where RMBF members have submitted the most 2012 House of the Year entries of any region in the country. Great stuff!

Andrew Darlington
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chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

Not time to party just yet . . .



The residential building consent figures for March show a sharp improvement in the number issued.

We have been experiencing a gradual and perceptible increase in activity since the last quarter of 2011, culminating in March seeing 1559 residential building consents (including apartments) issued.

Prior to that we had 1204 in February, 1098 in January and 1127 in December (traditionally quiet months), 1384 in November and 1238 in October. For the first half of 2011 we were struggling to break 1000 new residential consents per month, so we are, indeed, experiencing uplift in activity.

This is long overdue and is to be welcomed. Heaven knows we desperately need it, but let's not get ahead of ourselves. I hate to be a party pooper, but I am not convinced we are "away" on another building boom.

Why? Well first, if we annualise the last quarter, that equates to about 15,500 per annum — still too few when the general consensus is that we need a long run average of around 22,000 to 25,000 per annum — hardly a boom.

Furthermore, the March results are heavily influenced by Auckland and Canterbury increases. The rest of the country is still quite flat, and you will all know how tough it still is out there, though slightly better than a year ago.

Is our prediction of a tail of two cities starting to materialise? — Canterbury, because of the quakes and work starting to trickle through, and Auckland because of a housing shortage starting to bite.

We will have to wait and see, particularly whether the Auckland growth is sustainable. Certainly, apprenticeship take-up is increased in Auckland and Canterbury, but nowhere else.

The general economy and the housing market is still very sluggish and, with new homes forming about 15% of existing house sales, that market needs to stabilise and improve for lenders and borrowers to have confidence in new builds.

However, I am reliably informed specialist lenders in the upper new home bracket are experiencing quite an increase in lending at the moment, which is often a sign of improved confidence in the economy.

Nevertheless, Europe is still not good, and we cannot buck international fortunes — we are just too small.

Gee . . . what a party pooper alright. But all I am trying to convey is that we are far from a nationwide recovery and, while things are indeed looking up, don't take your eye off the ball and relax.

Many have come this far and survived extremely tough conditions these past few years, but there are still headwinds to battle before we get the breeze behind us.

On another note, you will see articles on pages 12 and 13 in this issue of *Building Today* on falls from heights.

It has recently launched a three-year campaign to raise awareness about working safely at height to reduce the human and financial toll caused by falls from height.

Basically, doing nothing is not good enough and, after the initial awareness/education drive is over, the Department will start a greater level of enforcement.

So make sure you are up to speed with all this — read the article and ensure you have access to the *Best Practice Guidelines for Working at Height in New Zealand* that was recently launched. This is available on the Department's web site.

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'What I got out of Apprentice of the Year'



Tom Evans



Andrew Hamilton



Jono Spurdle

With entries now open for the Registered Master Builders Carters 2012 Apprentice of the Year, we caught up with three of last year's national finalists and asked them about their experiences in the competition, and what they got out of it. They are:

- Central North Island regional winner Tom Evans, 22, of HRS Construction, Christchurch (formerly worked for Kynoch Construction, Palmerston North).
- Central South Island regional winner Andrew Hamilton, 24, of HRS Construction, Christchurch.
- Northern regional winner Jono Spurdle, 21, of Warwick Gair Builders, North Shore, Auckland.

What was the most enjoyable part of the competition?

TE: Definitely all the social functions we got to attend throughout the competition, and meeting people from all areas of the construction industry.

AH: Meeting people, most of them becoming friends, and also gaining contacts throughout the industry.

JS: There were so many enjoyable parts. One of the best aspects for me was pushing myself towards self-excellence, striving to be the best building apprentice within New Zealand, along with meeting new, like-minded apprentices from all around the country. Also the Mana and respect you receive from fellow workmates, family and friends.

What part was the most challenging?

TE: The interviews. The judges really know what they're looking for, and they know how to find it.

AH: Being interviewed, and going through the whole process of the competition. But in the end, it pays off.

JS: The most challenging part was getting started, and having the confidence to stand up among your peers and believe that you have the qualities to be the Apprentice of the Year.

What is the best prize in the prize pack?

TE: It would have to be the Outward Bound course. It should be a good couple of weeks.

AH: Outward Bound.

JS: There were so many handouts and giveaways, but the best prize was the \$2000 Carters voucher. I was able to complete my tool kit with a number of new power tools!

Did you make any really good friends?

TE: For sure. I keep in touch with a few of the boys every now and again. I'm also now working in the same company as Andrew Hamilton in Christchurch.

AH: Yes, mostly with Tom Evans and Tom Storey (from Bay of Plenty). Tom Evans now works for the same company down here in Christchurch, which I helped him organise. We see each other most days, which is good.

JS: I made a number of new friends. As we all had a common interest, it was very easy to get along and we always had something to talk about. I look forward to the Outward Bound course we're attending toward the end of this year, where I'm sure the friendships will grow stronger yet again.

What did you think about the whole experience?

TE: The national event as a whole for me was an

experience of a lifetime.

AH: I had a lot of fun. It was a great experience to be involved in.

JS: I think the competition at a national level was amazing! It was fantastically run, where apprentices were tested and judged in all areas, from hands-on skills to the theory and practice behind the trade.

Do you think the competition had a good influence on your attitude to your career?

TE: Yeah, 100%. I can't see myself in any other career path. Building is challenging, rewarding and very progressive if you're willing to work hard.

AH: It definitely made me want to succeed more.

JS: I felt myself grow more as a person and a carpenter. I had a much better understanding of the trade and the practical skills involved. After proving myself by winning the Northern event, I was then given higher duties at work with more responsibility.

Entries for the Apprentice of the Year are open until June 28, 2012. For further info, or to download an entry form, go to www.apprenticeoftheyear.co.nz. Entry forms can also be collected from Carters stores nationwide.

Apprentices, employers and those young people aspiring to be a part of the construction industry are encouraged to join up to the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear.

The Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor Carters, the Registered Master Builders Federation, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsor the Department of Building and Housing.

Golden Bay builder 'a true craftsman'

W Rothwell Builder's renovation of a 1970s bach in Takaka caught the eye of judges in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2011 House of the Year.

Having once been a honeymoon retreat, judges say the home is now a tribute to the life and memories of its owner.

W Rothwell Builder director Wayne Rothwell is pleased with the acknowledgment he received from his first-time entry, which scooped the PlaceMakers Renovation Award \$250,000 - \$500,000 at the National Awards.

"It was really fantastic, actually. You never really know quite where you are in the building scene, so this was good recognition," Mr Rothwell says.

"In a small place like Takaka, the word gets around that you've been given an award. It's great for business, especially in a smaller area like this. It's definitely good as a selling tool, too."

The two-bedroom, two-bathroom home at Patons Rock includes a hobbies room and a deck leading onto a paved courtyard, while the lounge features a raised exposed macrocarpa rafted ceiling, creating a bright aspect to the heart of the home.

Judges said respect for the strong original form has been complemented by subtle additions that enhance the original bach.

"Triangular vertical battens on new cladding sympathetically relate to the saw tooth roofline," they said.

"A true craftsman has carried out the work with attention to detail in a renovation that has been cleverly executed with accuracy and thought, creating a comfortable and very special home."

Mr Rothwell, who worked on the renovation with just an apprentice and a part-time labourer, said the renovation was basically a total house rebuild.

"It had a lot of good aspects to it. It had an interesting exterior roofline, and from the period in which it was built, up to the present day, it fits in really well," Mr Rothwell says.

"I was lucky to have a very good client on this



W Rothwell Builder, Takaka, was the winner of the PlaceMakers Renovation Award \$250,000 - \$500,000 in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2011 House of the Year with this entry.



job. I always try to have a good rapport with clients, and I try to aspire to what their needs and aspirations are all the time," he says.

Mr Rothwell was a member of Registered Master Builders when he was based in Franz Josef on the West Coast, and joined again when he moved to Golden Bay.

"I thought it would be a good organisation to get back into because I knew what they represented and how they worked. I get good support, go to a few meetings, and give feedback as well," he says.

Mr Rothwell says joining the Registered Master Builders is worthwhile.

"When you're a small business like we are, you need as much support as you can get. There are systems in place, and guarantees, so if

things come unstuck with a client, you've got back-up within the system," he says.

As for entering the House of the Year competition, Mr Rothwell says if you want to see where your company is in the market, it is a great thing to be involved in.

Entries for the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year have now closed.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, Gib Living Solutions®, Nulook, Department of Building and Housing, Future-Proof Building and Master Build Services Ltd.

For more information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site at www.masterbuilder.org.nz.

Consistency a winning tactic for Inhaus

Nelson boutique building company Inhaus Developments Ltd is known for its consistency, achieving numerous local and Gold Reserve awards in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year since it first entered in 2005.

But the company hit the jackpot in 2011, winning two national awards for a stunning holiday home in Abel Tasman National Park — the Nulook Builders Own Home and the BRANZ Sustainable Homes under \$500,000 categories.

Set on an idyllic cliff edge overlooking the National Park, the four-bedroom, two-bathroom waterside home, with no services and only boat access, is a truly peaceful, getaway retreat.

The sustainable features make this self-sufficient home stand out among others, with double glazing, insulated floors, walls and roof space, and a wood fire used for both heating and cooking.

Power is generated from a solar power system, hot water is heated by a solar wetback, rainwater is collected, and house water is treated with a Biolytix system.

Managing director Russell Campbell says the home, which he built for himself and his family, suits the location down to a "t".

"It's a simple design, and it takes us back to basics. When we go up there, it's a real buzz because it's completely off the grid," he says.

The secluded setting, a 20-minute boat ride away, required some well-planned logistics when it came down to construction. All material was transported to the location on a barge, and was then loaded off by helicopter.

"Because it was my own, and it wasn't a priority job, the project was built over 12 to 18 months by me and one of my regular builders," he says.

"Then we involved my family. I have two young boys, one who is now an apprentice with us. I wanted the family involved because I don't plan on selling it. It's at a unique location and it's irreplaceable, so by involving them, it gives them a sense of ownership."

Priding himself in his eye for detail, Mr



InHaus, Nelson, was the winner of the Nulook Builders Own Home, and Sustainable Homes under \$500,000 categories in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2011 House of the Year with this entry.



Campbell says for a small company, Inhaus has punched well and truly above its weight.

"We strive to win, consistently. We focus purely on what we do, and doing it well, and as a smaller company, people deal with me and not some salesman," he says.

Mr Campbell is a member of Registered Master Builders because of the recognition he receives for his efforts, his workmanship and his achievements, and his membership gives him the ability to enter House of the Year.

Inhaus currently has a number of projects on the go, including a holiday home at the tranquil Split Apple Rock, Abel Tasman, another in the planning stage at Kaiteriteri, and two residential homes in Nelson.

The company has entered the House of the Year competition again this year, with a property on Old Coach Road, Nelson, in the

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000 category.

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Principal sponsor



Canterbury builders confident with most entries in House of the Year

Canterbury builders have embraced the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year by submitting the most entries for a single region in the competition.

Residential entry numbers in Canterbury are up by 60%, and RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn says the numbers have exceeded expectations given the current climate in the industry.

"Builders in Canterbury have had a tough couple of years, but this increase in entries signifies a positive step forward for the city's rebuild," he says.

"It shows us that Registered Master Builders know that showcasing the homes they're building is a vital component of their marketing, and benchmarking themselves against their peers is a great way to gain recognition."

Judging is underway in Canterbury, with three panels assessing the new homes and renovations, sustainable entries, show homes and builders' own homes, looking to find the top houses built by the best builders the country has to offer.

Judges have also begun assessing homes in South Canterbury and Ashburton. These two regions have this year joined forces, forming the South and Mid-Canterbury region.

Travelling from the bottom of the South Island to the top of the North, the judges will scrutinise more than 340 homes in 12 regions across New Zealand between April and July.

John Beveridge, chief executive of principal sponsor PlaceMakers, is pleased to see the increase in entry

numbers.

"It's a real positive to see such an increase in entries in the residential market for this year's competition, and we're delighted to see that engagement from New Zealand's residential building industry," Mr Beveridge says.

"If entries are an indicator of increased activity in this sector, and the growing importance of quality building practices, then we couldn't be more delighted."

This year, for the first time since 2006, the House of the Year competition will run separately to the RMB Commercial Project Awards.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn is enthusiastic about the change, and believes the split of the competition will allow members to more effectively showcase their skills in their respective areas of expertise.

Judging will conclude in early July, before the first regional event in the Southern region on July 7.

The Awards are made possible through the support of principal sponsor PlaceMakers, and supporting sponsors James Hardie, Gib Living Solutions®, Nulook, Department of Building and Housing, Future-Proof Building and Master Build Services Ltd.

Property Council appoints new president

Tony Sewell, chief executive of Ngai Tahu Property Ltd has been elected Property Council national president in Auckland recently.

As new national president, Mr Sewell will bring a wealth of knowledge spanning more than 40 years in the construction and property industries, along with an understanding of current seismic challenges in Canterbury and throughout New Zealand.

He has been in charge of the lwi-owned business since its establishment in 1994, and a member of the Property Council since 1999.

"My appointment recognises the significant role that the Maori economy now plays in New Zealand, particularly in the property sector," Mr Sewell says.

"While I am national president, I would like to see the

Property Council remain an influential advisor to central and local government.

"I would also like to see the property sector take a leading role in the development and funding of infrastructure in New Zealand."

Mr Sewell takes over from outgoing national president Chris Gudgeon, who has served in the role for the past two and a half years. Mr Gudgeon has been a strong advocate for removing financial disincentives for the commercial property industry.

"I look forward to supporting our new president with our continuing campaign to get government to address deficiencies in current tax policy which act to deter investment in the reconstruction of Christchurch and earthquake strengthening around the country," Mr Gudgeon says.



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Industry seeing potential in BIM

Masterspec, the producers of New Zealand's national specification system — in conjunction with BRANZ and NBS (UK) — has released a report on its National BIM survey for 2012.

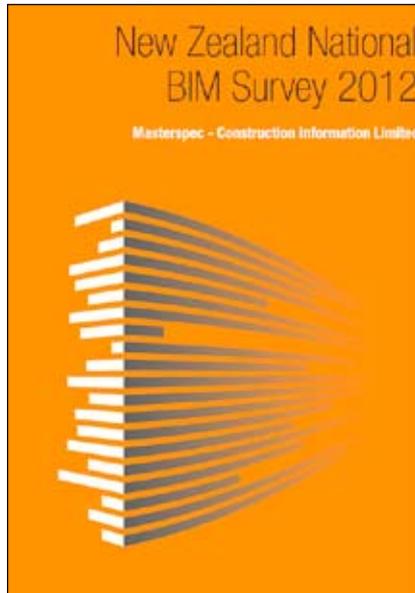
BIM (Building Information Modelling) has been on the construction industry radar for some years, but is finally showing signs of becoming an important resource for all involved in design and construction.

The government-sponsored Productivity Partnership has also recognised that BIM is a critical factor in the industry, achieving the Partnership's inspirational goal of lifting sector productivity by 20% by 2020.

The survey reveals positive signs that a growing sector of the industry is beginning to see the potential of this technology shift.

However, there are still some important challenges to meet, both by individual industry members and key industry organisations.

The term Building Information Modelling has a wide



spectrum of meanings, even among those who say they are already using the new technology.

This requires a level of caution in interpreting the survey results. For example, some respondents think they are using BIM simply because they design in 3D CAD, and have not yet taken that important step into a fully collaborative approach to design and construction.

Significant road blocks

The report also indicates some significant roadblocks before the industry can gain the full benefit of this technology — specifically, a lack of agreed industry-wide protocols, frameworks and tools.

The information from the survey is now forming the basis for discussions with industry stakeholders, with the aim of arriving at a co-ordinated and achievable outcome.

The comprehensive BIM report, including industry leader opinions and a "Next Steps" section, can be accessed from www.masterspec.co.nz.

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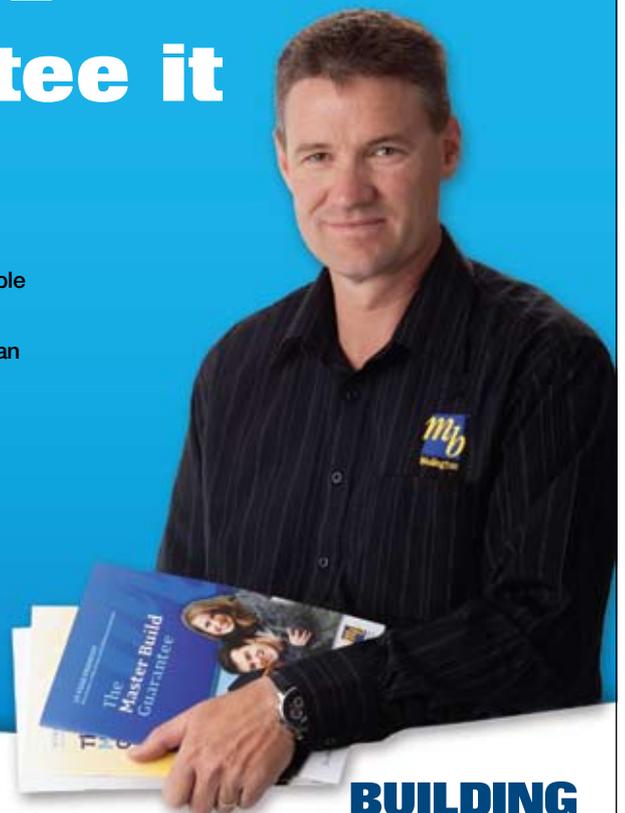
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Go Further

New guidelines to prevent falls on site

Minister of Labour Kate Wilkinson has recently launched new guidance to reduce the workplace death and injury toll from falls in the construction sector.

Best Practice Guidelines for Working at Height in New Zealand was launched at the new Wigram Skies housing subdivision in Christchurch as part of the Department of Labour's Preventing Falls from Height project.

Minister Wilkinson told the construction industry there's no longer any excuse for failure to work safely at height.

"These guidelines give everyone in the industry clear, simple advice that will help bring down the death and injury toll from avoidable falls in the construction industry," Ms Wilkinson said.

Department of Labour general manager southern Jean Martin says the construction sector has one of the highest rates of workplace fatalities, and the third highest rate of serious injury.

"Investigations show that more than half the falls from



The event included practical demonstrations on working safely at height.

height reported to the Department of Labour involve construction workers falling from less than three metres — often from ladders and single-storey roofs.

"This sobering picture is why preventing falls from height is a priority for the Department of Labour," Ms Martin says.

The launch event was opened by Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu general manager tribal interests David

Perenara-O'Connell. The Wigram Skies subdivision is being developed by Ngai Tahu Property.

Organisations supporting the event include Hawkins Construction, Fletcher Construction, the New Zealand Construction Association, the Construction Safety Council and the Roofing Association of New Zealand

The event included practical demonstrations on working safely at height.

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Construction one of five sectors with poor workplace fatalities record

A review of the Department of Labour's Workplace Health and Safety Strategy to 2015 revealed a gap between the high level strategy framework and action at the workplace, and at sector and hazard level.

The Preventing Falls from Height project is part of the Construction Sector Action Plan — one of five Sector Action Plans and a national Occupational Health Plan that support a three-year National Action Agenda to address this gap.

The Sector Action Plans focus on the five sectors with consistently high levels of workplace injury, disease and fatalities — construction, agriculture, manufacturing, forestry and fishing.

The Construction Sector Action Plan has a very clear focus on slips, trips and falls from height, and the Department has since committed to delivering the Preventing Falls from Height Project, of which the Guidelines are one deliverable.

Best Practice Guidelines for Working at Height in New Zealand was developed by the Department of Labour in association with 21 businesses and industry associations from across New Zealand's construction sector.

• **Best Practice Guidelines for Working at Height in New Zealand is available on the Department of Labour web site:**
www.dol.govt.nz/prevent-falls/index.asp

Lockwood Homes survives the test of time

Developed and patented in 1951 by Dutch immigrants Joe La Grouw Snr and John van Loghem, the Lockwood Building System is an engineering innovation that has survived the tests of time, where so many others have failed. It enjoys worldwide recognition and success in the most extreme situations internationally.

With more than 60 years of experience and continuous development, Lockwood has evolved with design, technological innovation, enhanced flexibility and cost-efficiency to expand the system's appeal and range of applications.

Lockwood homes are renowned for standing strong against whatever nature throws at them, be it a Darwin tropical cyclone or terrifying earthquakes in Christchurch. Christchurch home owners Mark and Maxie Christison can testify to this.

"Over 10,000 earthquakes have been suffered in Christchurch over the past 18 months. Some of these have exerted forces up to seven to eight times those required by the New Zealand building standards on our Lockwood," they say.

"We are within 1km of the epicentre of two of the biggest quakes. On four separate occasions these events have released energy in excess of the combined Hiroshima and Nagasaki atom bombs.

"Our family has continued to live in our home throughout all this, with only superficial damage to a gib wall and the concrete floor (both non-Lockwood). We will never in live in any other kind of house in New Zealand."

The Christisons' story is typical of so many Christchurch Lockwood owners.

Lockwood homes are locked together, not merely nailed together. In fact, the intricately engineered solid pine building system does not use nails at all. It is locked together in totally unique ways not matched by any other building system.

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DBH works to speed up Christchurch rebuild

Building approval system streamlined to cope with extra demand

The Department of Building and Housing is supporting the Christchurch City Council to improve its building consenting processes and its ways of working to meet increased demand as a result of the earthquakes.

The Department undertook a Baseline Assessment review of the council's consenting process in November 2011.

The review identified a number of areas where building approval processes could be improved, and recommended changes in three key areas: workflow software and information technology, organisational structure and resourcing models, and process efficiencies.

Problems found

Department deputy chief executive sector capability Alison Geddes says a few problems were found with building approval processes, but the council had

responded well to the report.

"The two organisations are working together to ensure best practice is achieved," Ms Geddes says. "An effective and efficient consenting process is critical to the rebuilding of Canterbury."

The review of the period July to November 2011 found that 30% of consents had taken longer than the statutory 20 working day period to process. But with the recommended changes in place the council is confident that consents will be processed in less time.

Changes include:

- The recruitment of up to 70 new staff over time to help handle demand,
- The creation of a streamlined system which provides a one-stop shop for the processing of all central city earthquake-related consents, and
- The launch of new technology and administration systems to replace outdated software and cut administration times.

Recommendations addressed or implemented

Almost all of the recommendations are in the process of being addressed or implemented. The council has taken steps to change its organisational structure and resourcing models, and is working through its process inefficiencies, including its use of software and information technology.

In response to the Department's recommendation to improve workflow software, in January this year the council went live with a new document management system.

Build Express enables and accelerates the transfer of consent documents and communication between applicants, consulting engineers and council officers. It allows visibility for customers to see where their consent is in the process at any time, and is ideally suited to large volumes such as those in Canterbury.

Along with Build Express is a package solution known as Pathways — which is used extensively by councils in Australia and New Zealand — that has been selected to replace existing GEMS software, with the target date for first release being September 2012.

The Department's assessment recommended technical resources to be reorganised. New teams aligned to types of services are now being formed.

'Free' pre-application meetings

Another recommended focus is the improvement of consent application quality to reduce processing and rework time, and the instituting of "free" pre-application meetings for commercial work.

There will be no charge for the first half hour of pre-application advice for regulatory services. The council is undertaking a Go Ahead campaign which informs the public about pre-application meetings.

"The Department is confident that the council is now well on the way to implementing a building approval system that has the capacity to cope with the demands of the rebuild," Ms Geddes says.

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back in time^{o o o}

BT's Back in Time

Welcome to Back in Time, where we delve into our magazine archives and discover what was making news way back when . . .

20 years ago:

- Incoming NZMBF president Frank Allen said he held out strong hope for a better 1992-93 year for the New Zealand construction industry.

Although having enjoyed a 30-year career with major construction firm Downer Construction — five as managing director — Mr Allen was looking forward to his new challenge as president with much enthusiasm.

- Around 1000 jobs were expected to be created when construction began on the \$280 million Museum of New Zealand project in Wellington in 1993. Development Board chairman Sir Wallace Rowling said he envisaged that the complex would be on a par with the Louvre in Paris or the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

15 years ago:

- Retired Mt Maunganui builder Graham Mallett was elected president of the NZMBF. Mr Mallett was managing director of Hamilton commercial builders Foster Construction from 1973 until his retirement in 1995.

He had always held a strong interest in industry training, and was a member of the northern regional board of the BCITO.

- The strengthening and refurbishment of Parliament Buildings, and a private Auckland home were the two winning building projects in the NZIA-Resene national awards for excellence in architecture.

10 years ago:

- A new series of RMBF ads began airing on television this month. President Chris Preston, who appeared in the ads along with Auckland member Marty van der Burg, said it was important that the Federation maintain a strong brand in the marketplace, not only for its residential builders, but also for its commercial and volume house builders.

5 years ago:

- RMBF chief executive Pieter Burghout criticised Building and Construction Minister Clayton Cosgrove's plans to broaden the DIY licensing exemption that was initially agreed to in 2006.

He said the Minister was running the extreme risk of jeopardising the integrity of the whole Licensed Building Practitioner scheme with his new proposals announced at the RMBF's 2007 conference.

"There is the strongest of bottom lines underpinning our (RMBF's) input," Mr Burghout said. "We can't have a licensing scheme that's been sabotaged from the outset by allowing rogue builders to carry on doing what they do and masquerade as DIYers."

National Building Contract

Soon all building projects over \$20,000 will require a mandatory Building Contract.

The National Building Contract published by the New Zealand Institute of Architects is for use between the Contractor and the owner and is widely used within the building industry. Two versions are available to suit your needs. One is for Small Works, the General version for larger projects.

You can obtain a copy of both contracts at www.nzia.co.nz in the E-Shop.



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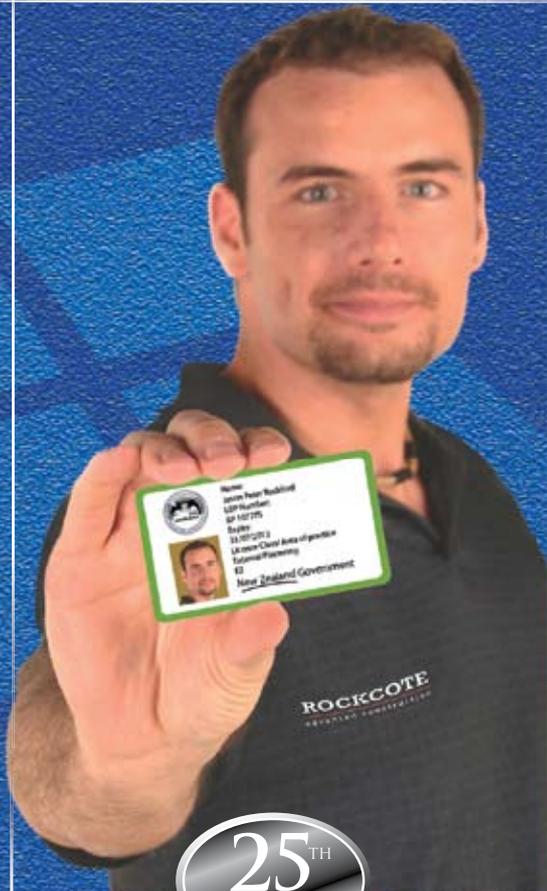
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bcito news

BCITO releases funding for employer development

The BCITO has recently released funding to help construction industry employers develop and expand their businesses.

Fifteen Employer Development Grants are available in 2012 for employers of current BCITO apprentices. Each grant is worth a maximum of \$3000 excluding GST.

This comes after the successful uptake of 15 grants from the 2011 calendar year, when this initiative was first offered.



The BCITO believes this support will help employers run successful long-term businesses, better placing them to provide ongoing investment in training and employment within New Zealand's construction industry.

This is an early response by the BCITO to one of the key concerns identified in the Built Environment Skills Strategy, as launched by Minister of Labour Kate Wilkinson earlier this year.

The initiative is therefore seen as a great way to help upskill New Zealand's construction industry, thereby increasing productivity and gearing up for future demand.

The output of the construction industry will come under increasing pressure as the Christchurch rebuild kicks into gear. In the north, the industry will be driven hard by housing shortages in Auckland and leaky building remediation.

Any employer of a current BCITO apprentice may apply, including supervisors and managers of an employing company. However, employers must have a current apprentice at the time of application and at the time the grant is claimed.

Employers can select any training or development assistance which best suits their personal or business development needs.

Some examples include:

- BCITO courses such as the National Certificate in Construction Trades,
- National Diploma in Construction Management,
- Consultation with a business advisor,
- Short courses or seminars on small business management, estimating or contract management, and
- Higher level business-related qualifications.

To access grants, employers must apply to the BCITO. All applications will be assessed on how well the intended use of funding meets the purpose of this scheme.

Employers interested in applying can access the application pack at www.bcito.org.nz, under the "Employers" page.

Alternatively, call the BCITO on 0800 4 BCITO.



So, when's this building boom? happening ●

Everyone's calling a boom, but it hasn't happened yet. BCITO **researchers** forecast mid-2012, but no-one can be certain. *But it will come.* No doubt about it.

When it comes you will need **people** and **skills** to grow your business. BCITO apprentice numbers are down by 50%, so where will this skill come from?

It is up to you to prepare now. We know it's tough to take on extra people, but you're going to need them, especially in Auckland and Christchurch.

BCITO can help you prepare.

We can help you find apprentices from our growing database. We can help formally qualify your existing team. We have 85 people on the ground ready to help now.

Shrink wrapping — the right way and the wrong way

When it comes to building-related projects, there is a right way of doing things and a wrong way. And the right way need not be the most expensive nor time consuming.

A little foresight and planning can make a big difference to a weather containment project being a success or not.

U-Shrink offers a complete design and hands-on installation service, which ensures the success of its projects. It is the only company to have New Zealand-qualified builders installing and wrapping.

As a result, the company understands what the builder is trying to achieve, and can recommend the most suitable options for any project. It also understands sub-trades, and works with them to achieve the best result possible.

Every job is unique, whether it's making a house weatherproof as a result of storm damage, or completely wrapping a construction site from the get go. Knowing what is required and having experienced installers means it will be done right first time.

Shrink wrap film comes in many grades of quality and thickness. U-Shrink uses heavy grade wrap which ensures a greater tolerance to wind and whatever the elements can throw at it.

U-Shrink's expertise is not only confined to the

construction industry. Matt Trayes, a director of U-Shrink, is a qualified international super yacht captain, and has extensive knowledge of the specific requirements surrounding weather containment for the marine and transportation industry.

"Many super yachts are often worth more than a home or building, so when they need weather containment

for repairs or refurbishment it needs to be faultless," Mr Trayes says.

With a nationwide installation service, national distribution and training for its DIY offering — combined with its experience — U-Shrink has everything in place to get the job done the right way.

The company can be contacted on 0508 333 777.



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Showerdome saves energy and maintenance costs

Extended research conducted by a leading New Zealand University has shown that a Showerdome, when used correctly, may pay for itself within two years.

Independently tested by the University of Waikato in January and August of 2011 to equate for summer and winter seasons, Showerdome proved successful at lowering humidity and sustaining air temperature in the bathroom.

This greatly reduced dampness, as no steam was created in the shower cubicle.

University of Waikato professor Dr James Carson says the results highlighted the short-term and long-term monetary benefit of owning a Showerdome.

"Depending on the consumer's use of electric heaters to preheat or dry out a bathroom, plus their use of heated towel rails, the Showerdome could save a consumer in the region of hundreds of dollars per year," Dr Carson says.

"Indirect savings due to reduced maintenance and healthcare costs may also result from the installation of a Showerdome."

According to estimates within the Waikato University research paper, heating a bathroom for half an hour a day with a 2.4kw electric heater would cost around \$100 per annum, while using a 0.15kw heated towel rail for 12 hours a day would cost around \$156 pa.

Showerdome also renders mirror demisters and ceiling fans redundant. Combining all of these factors, an installed Showerdome may save home owners around \$250 a year in energy costs alone.

Showerdome chief executive Maurice O'Reilly says the findings of the study are testament to the product's value in New Zealand homes.

"Anecdotal feedback from our customers related to consistent savings has shown that they now have far less use for heaters, mirror demisters, ceiling fans or heated towel rails thanks to Showerdome," Mr O'Reilly says.

"Customers have also expressed the benefits in terms of reduced maintenance costs. Many have said their wallpaper doesn't peel anymore, mould and mildew don't grow in the bathroom, and the house doesn't feel as damp."

Significant health benefits

As well as monetary benefits, Showerdome also offers significant health benefits. The main health benefit is that steam created from the shower is not able to flow into adjoining rooms, reducing condensation, mould, mildew and mites, and creating warmer, drier, healthier homes.

A New Zealand invention, Showerdome is a clear acrylic dome that, when fitted onto the top of a shower, prevents steam from forming.

Steam only forms when warm moist air from the shower collides with cold air outside the shower. This means that with a Showerdome, the shower and bathroom are completely steam free.

A Showerdome costs \$276 plus installation of around \$135 to \$150, depending on the region. For more information visit www.showerdome.co.nz.

Lifemark looking to the future

Currently the majority of New Zealand's housing stock is ill equipped to look after us as we age, a worrying situation when research suggests that by 2030, one quarter of New Zealand's population will be over 65 years of age and will have increased accessibility demands of their environment.



Lifetime Design Ltd general manager Andrew Olsen.

Lifetime Design Ltd general manager Andrew Olsen says in addition to a definitive lack of adequate housing stock, New Zealand currently has no regulations requiring homes to meet accepted standards of adaptability and accessibility, as seen overseas, he says.

"This 'self-regulatory' approach could see the tax payer shelling out millions to retrofit future homes in the future to accommodate the rising demand for housing suitable for older people."

However, in the absence of regulations and guidelines, New Zealand's builders and developers can find the solution in the Lifemark, Mr Olsen says.

"A quality assurance scheme, the Lifemark gives the building sector a ready-made package of comprehensive, research-based design principles for adaptable and accessible cost-effective housing.

Clear differentiator

Building with the Lifemark Design Standards is not only common sense, but provides a clear differentiator for New Zealand's building professionals in a crowded market where the demand for quality adaptable and accessible housing is only going to increase," Mr Olsen says.

"Homes awarded the Lifemark have 32 of these design features, such as a level entry and widened doors and passageways that make it accessible for everyone and easy to adapt across a lifetime.

"By actively constructing new homes with the Lifemark Design standards, builders and developers will be best placed to meet the approaching demand for housing that is suitable for all occupants, no matter what age, stage or ability," Mr Olsen says.

A recent survey of 2000 industry professionals found 74% of respondents were designing housing projects for the 50+ age group, of which 85% are already including specific design features which will accommodate them as they age, because the clients are asking for it.

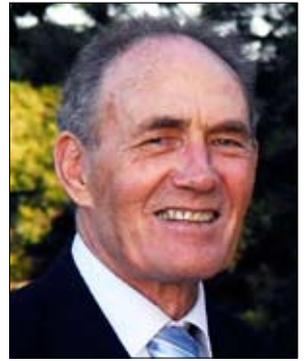
There are multiple factors to consider for any builder or developer interested in designing and building with the Lifemark.

"You will have a lot to offer investors, including major savings on future maintenance and renovation costs, a unique marketing story and, whether leasing or selling, appealing to a much broader market," Mr Olsen says.

To make your point of difference as a builder or developer, take advantage of adopting the Lifemark by accessing the full range of features available online at www.lifemark.co.nz.

Outer space

Architect **Don Bunting** rattles off some more random observations about the construction industry at large. This month: Auckland's public spaces.



To misquote Wordsworth, I recently "wandered past a lonely cloud" to the end of Queen's Wharf in Auckland. Queen's Wharf was the centre of the infamous fan zone during the recent Rugby World Cup.

Totally inadequate as the space proved to be in coping with the crowds, it now looks a bit forlorn, with its empty blow up building dubbed "The Cloud" on the western edge of the wharf area and a very much locked up Shed 10 opposite.

And please don't mention that so-called stadium at the other end of the Rugby World Cup fan trail. In a way, the ambience of Eden Park is well suited to the dire state of Auckland rugby. But what a wasted opportunity to create a really great public sporting venue, preferably for all football codes to use and enjoy.

Now we have something that doesn't work for either rugby or cricket, surrounded by a series of strangely unmatched grandstands and terraces.

We don't always do good public space in Auckland, aside from the Viaduct area and new North Wharf development on the waterfront, and some growing signs of life in Britomart.

They have even spruced up Aotea Square after sorting out Auckland's largest "leaky building". The car park area underneath was, for a time, in serious danger from water ingress and overloading.

Auckland architects can, when they have the right client, produce some really good public architecture — alongside some really bad apartment developments that now dominate parts of the city fringe.

The new Auckland Art Galley extensions were designed by Aussies, but even local critics recognise this as a fine bit of work, with some really nifty, if small, public spaces surrounding the building and well considered inside-to-outside views from the interior to Albert Park.

So it can be done. We can expect and get thoughtful development of the spaces around our public buildings.

But walk across the road to what is effectively the main approach to the Art Gallery from the city — Khartoum Place — to experience arguably the very worst example of urban oversight and neglect.

It's frankly no better and looks more like a public toilet than a public space. All for want of a relatively small investment by our grandly entitled and seemingly



Totally inadequate as the space proved to be in coping with the crowds during last year's Rugby World Cup, Queen's Wharf now looks a bit forlorn, with its empty blow up building dubbed "The Cloud" on the western edge of the wharf area and a very much locked up Shed 10 opposite.



Queen Elizabeth Square is a mixture of glazed and grubby bus station canopies, a few odd kiosk-type structures and some really weird landscaping between the recently renovated office buildings on the western side.



The main approach to the Art Gallery from the city — Khartoum Place — is arguably the very worst example of urban oversight and neglect.

moribund Auckland Council.

Sure there are some important heritage issues to address, but surely Women's Suffrage deserves more than an untidy mural adorning an untidy and

unattractive staircase.

The nearby area in front of the Auckland Central Library is also an unsatisfactory mixture of public square and access route, illustrating a council that

Australia's notorious Port Arthur

Dr Kerry Rodgers ruminates upon our neighbour's convict past



Australia has been celebrating its convict past — again. In 2010, 11 dinky-di former convict sites were inscribed in UNESCO's World Heritage List. They are now recognised as places of "outstanding universal value" ... "the best surviving examples of large-scale convict transportation and the colonial expansion of European powers through the presence and labour of convicts."

Make of that what ye will. Among the 11 is Tasmania's Port Arthur.

From 1833 until 1877 the prison at Port Arthur was the end of the line for those who got up the noses of the authorities in other Australian penal settlements. Here the cons could enjoy the strictest security measures British ingenuity could provide.

The layout of the complex was based on Jeremy Bentham's Model Prison. Four prisoner wings radiated out symmetrically from a central surveillance core, with exercise yards in each corner.

The housing and labour conditions were as bad, if not worse, than in other Australian prisons. Of particular

note, Port Arthur saw a move from physical to psychological punishment.

If that sounds like an improvement, it was not. It drove many inmates nuts.

As in other institutions, good behaviour was rewarded with luxury items such as tea, sugar and tobacco, with persistent troublemakers limited to bread and water.

But at Port Arthur prisoners were regularly hooded and made to stay silent for lengthy times to allow them to reflect upon their immoral and shameful ways. The result was an upturn in mental illnesses that required an asylum to be built next door.

Boys as young as nine were housed there, and when a tramway was established in 1836 between Taranna and Long Bay, north of Port Arthur, the sole propulsion was convicts.

Nonetheless, Port Arthur became the pin-up in the Mother Country among the enlightened touting for penal reform.

Port Arthur, too, was hyped as escape-proof. The connection to the mainland of the Eaglehawk was just 30m wide. It was fenced and guarded by soldiers, man

traps and savage dogs.

However, this provided just the challenge the more inventive prisoners needed to relieve their boredom, and several successful escapes were made.

Critics have argued that in its use of psychological punishment, coupled with the scant hope of escape, Port Arthur was probably the worst of Australia's convict institutions.

And, if you fancy a visit the next time you are in Tassie, you will find Port Arthur some 60km south-east of Hobart.

There is a pleasant scenic drive, or you can take the bus or ferry. It is also a great place to see and hear ghosts.

© K.A. Rodgers 2011



The remains of the Port Arthur penal colony prison.

Image: JJ Harrison, Wikimedia Commons

seems to lose confidence when it gets half way through what could have been a really attractive and useful public area.

Development of the space is not helped by the continuing procrastination about the future of the adjoining St James Theatre, arguably the best mid-size performance venue in the city, that is being left to slowly rot.

Consider also what should be one of Auckland's main public areas — Queen Elizabeth Square, opposite the former Chief Post Office (now the entrance to the illogically located underground Britomart train station).

The square is a mixture of glazed and grubby bus station canopies, a few odd kiosk-type structures and some really weird landscaping between the recently renovated office buildings on the western side of the square. Gravel and kauri trees? — I just don't get it.

But please, not another competition to solve our urban challenges. All too often this leads to a period of procrastination followed by a cheap-as answer, such as happened with Queens Wharf.

The Te Wero Bridge between the Viaduct and North Wharf is another design disappointment. It's a great asset that Aucklanders now use and enjoy, but after the council blithely ignored the winners of a public competition, the current utilitarian answer looks more like mayor Len Brown dug his old meccano set out of the family toy cupboard.

However, all other urban disappointments fade into insignificance against the enclosed space facing the Newmarket Railway Station.

The station building is a very good piece of architectural sculpture — in contrast to the lego-like effort by the designers of the apartments forming the

other three sides of the square.

However, this square has to be one of the most unpleasant spaces in urban Auckland. Unsurprisingly, most of the shops are empty, not helped by the mean and meagre proportions of the approaches off Broadway and Remuera Road.

It reminds me of some of the less successful inner-city renewal projects put up in the UK in the 60s and 70s. Even on a sunny summer's day there is no incentive to stop, shop or rest on the way to catching your train.

More's the pity. For a city blessed with a fabulous harbour setting, numerous parks bequeathed by our early city fathers and mothers, and great volcanic landforms, we seem to struggle to stump up that little bit extra needed to create some truly attractive public spaces.

Can council inspection delays result in successful negligence claims?

Tim Bates and Sarah Wray of Auckland law firm Legal Vision present a case where the council alleged a leaky building owner did not have a cause of action against it based upon significant delays in the council's inspection process.



For various reasons, it is not uncommon for there to be long delays between construction of a building and final inspections and the issue of code compliance certificates.

The issue in the decision of *Gauld v Waimakariri District Council* (HC, 21/3/2012; *Christholm J*, Christchurch, [2012] NZHC 203, CIV 2011-409-392) was: Can leaky building owners argue that a delay by the council in the inspection process is negligent and, thereby, obtain recovery?

In this case, Gauld was issued with a notice to fix and replace the exterior cladding. He undertook the required remedial work and subsequently issued

proceedings alleging, among other things, that the council was negligent in failing to take any steps in the inspection process for four years.

The timeline for the inspections included the following:

- Gauld's dwelling was constructed in 1993 except for an upstairs bathroom. Inspections were made by the council during the course of construction.
- In 1995 the council asked Gauld to arrange a further inspection.
- The upstairs bathroom was completed in March 2002.
- Mr Gauld's wife asked for an inspection and this was carried out on March 11, 2002. The notice of inspection raised a number of issues, but there was no reference to the exterior cladding.
- A "final" inspection was undertaken on November 13, 2002. The notice of inspection had boxes relating to "weathertightness" and "other monolithic claddings", and these were ticked. The notes record that the inspector was checking crossed items to see what applied, and that the inspector would get back to the owner.
- On October 6, 2004 the council sent a generic notice to ratepayers advising that the Building Act 1991 was to be replaced by a new Act and, among other things, this might have implications for building owners who had obtained a building consent but had not yet obtained a code compliance certificate. After receiving the notice Mr Gauld asked the council to carry out a final inspection.
- A further inspection was carried out on March 10, 2005. The notice stated that re-inspection was not required. Gauld said the building inspector commented to Gauld that he would be pleased to "get that out of the way", and shook hands with Gauld. Gauld said he was led to believe that this was the final inspection, that no re-inspection was required, and that a CCC would be issued.
- There was a further inspection on March 22, 2005. Mr Gauld was not present but the notice left recorded the purpose of the inspection was "cladding final", and it was recorded that the council's agent for the performance of building control functions was "to advise".

No further steps were taken by the council. In particular, no notice to rectify was issued.

In early 2009 Gauld became aware that a CCC had not been issued. His solicitor wrote to the council seeking the issue of a certificate. The council declined and indicated it would issue a notice to fix. This was issued and effectively required a replacement of the exterior cladding.

The particular issue before the court was that the council alleged that none of the causes of action (including that the council was negligent in failing to take any steps in the inspection process between 2005 and 2009) could succeed.

The council argued that the dwelling did not comply with either the 1991 or 2004 Building Acts or the relevant Building Codes. Thus, any breaches by the council in 2005 did not cause any loss because a CCC could not have been issued.

The judge stated that at least in the context of the strike out/summary judgment application this argument was unsustainable because it was the four-year delay that lay at the heart of the negligence cause of action.

Because the cladding passed the earlier inspections, the judge mentioned that it was unlikely that all the work that had to be undertaken in 2009 would have been required in 2005 if the issue had been addressed at that time.

In addition, it was unlikely the cost for the same works would have been the same in 2009 as it would have been in 2005.

The council's applications for an order striking out the statement of claim or entering summary judgment in its favour were dismissed.

In doing so, the court found Gauld's claims (including that he was promised the CCC but no further steps were taken for four years) arguable.

Note: This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.

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Win a Showerdome!

Extended research conducted by the University of Waikato has shown that a Showerdome, when used correctly, may pay for itself within two years.

University professor Dr James Carson says: "Indirect savings due to reduced maintenance and healthcare costs may also result from the installation of a Showerdome."

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For more information or to find your nearest agent, visit www.showerdome.co.nz.

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