



News and New Products

News for Customers

Welcome to the latest issue of our Internet version of Common Bond, the news letter for customers of Istock Building Products.

If your company does not already receive a copy then please E-mail us with your Name, Title and company address and we'll be pleased to add you to the mailing list.

We hope that you find this information useful and we will be pleased to hear your suggestions or comments about any of the articles featured.

Marianne Jepson - Editor

Contents: click on the bookmark to go to that article

[Ravenhead Open Day](#)

[Perfect Fit](#)

[How You Rate Us](#)

[Clock Tower Plaque Made In No Time](#)

[Cattybrook Showroom](#)

[Getting Things Right at Work](#)

[Contract Management in a Safe Pair of Hands](#)

[Site Manager of the Year Awards](#)

[Winning Ways](#)

[Total Specials Solutions](#)

[Streetwise](#)

[Architectural Terracotta - Think About It](#)

Ravenhead Open Day

Our Ravenhead Works, near Skelmersdale, Lancashire, will be hosting a customer open day on **Thursday 15th July 1999**, from 10.00am to 2.00pm, and everyone is welcome!

This will be a special occasion, not to be missed! We shall be launching some exciting new products and fresh initiatives.

If you are involved in buying and selling bricks, you must be there!

Features will include :

New product launch * Seminar presentation * CAD demonstration * New range introduction

Product innovation ideas * Factory tours (to include the new rumbling capacity)

Display of Hatherware * Web-Site demonstration * Shaws Glazed Bricks exhibition

Cast Stone products display * RDL Distribution stand and lots more!



There will also be competitions, gifts and a chance to win a luxury weekend break for two!

Refreshments will be available all day, with a barbecue lunch (weather permitting!).

For an invitation, please contact Amanda Anderton at our Ravenhead office on

01695 625511, or E-Mail us at parkhouse.sales@ibstock.co.uk

We look forward to welcoming you on the day!

Marianne Jepson

Sales Administration Manager



Perfect Fit

Closer to you, new Ibstock advertising appearing in architectural and building press, features suits with superimposed brick textures. There are two quite different images, reflecting that our service is individually tailored to the needs of different customer types. We'd be happy to have your feedback.



How you rate us

The survey, covering all aspects of our service, is 'one of the most extensive and thorough surveys in the sector' according to a market research specialist. So our thanks go to everyone who took time to respond, highlighting what we are doing right and where we need to try harder - the feedback vital for continued service improvements.

Breakdown of customer types

Specifiers 221
 Merchants 251
 Factors 75
 Housebuilders 140
Total 687

These are the findings:

Overall satisfaction with Ibstock is significantly improved from 7.1 out of 10 in 1997 to 7.5 out of 10 1998.

Better performance in virtually all areas. 44 out of 47 service elements measured have shown improvement.

Strong improvements in marketing services including point of sale, leaflets and literature.

The speed, flexibility and accuracy of our delivery service is perceived to have improved vastly, reflecting better communication between Ibstock, our customers and our distribution network.

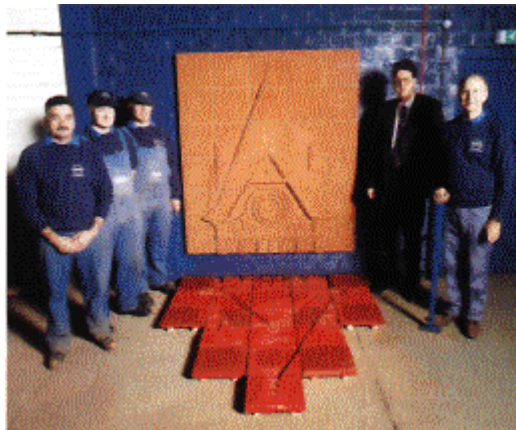
High ratings for:

range of products
quality of products
appearance/politeness of sales representatives
honesty and integrity
technical and product knowledge

92% of our customers say that overall they are satisfied, very satisfied or entirely satisfied with the performance of Ibstock.

Increased numbers of customers say that Ibstock's sales office support is better than that of other brick companies.

The 1999 survey will take place this summer and we shall be hoping for further improvements as we strive for our Continuous Improvement goal of providing "the best service in terms of response, courtesy, helpfulness, efficiency, knowledge and value.



Clock Tower Plaque made in no time

Design expertise, CAD support, craft skills and manufacturing know how went into the making of a commemorative plaque for the newly extended Handsworth College in Birmingham. The plaque, which replicates the college Clock Tower, has pride of place in the College reception area and is seen by everyone entering the premises.

The design brief was formulated between project managers Donaldsons, factor Taylor Maxwell and Ibstock's West Midlands design advisor, Andy Batterham.

After initial sketch ideas, photographs of the tower were used by CAD Services at Leicester and detailed drawings produced. Once approved full size drawings, plus shrinkage, were output as templates for the mould makers at Leicester factory.

Leicester Red Stock was used because of its subtle and warm appearance and its eight week availability. Turnaround for this unique item - including design time - was under eight weeks.

Cattybrook Showroom - You suggested. We acted

A new showroom has been opened at Cattybrook works near Bristol, displaying the Ibstock brick ranges, together with interesting building details in the Design Garden.

The showroom results from feedback at the April 1998 Cattybrook open day where many customers suggested a permanent showroom there, allowing people to visit and select products on the spot.

Your local representative or sales office will be happy to give details.



Getting Things Right at Work



Sales and Marketing
Director
John Richards

Our Company Vision is to be the hallmark of quality products, people and services, continually improving for our customers, shareholders and our employees. A key goal is to ensure a well informed, highly committed and enthusiastic workforce.

To gauge our progress we asked The Industrial Society to undertake our Employee Opinion Survey for the second year running. People were free to voice their opinions and confidentiality was guaranteed. An excellent response rate of 86% was achieved.

Overall the employee satisfaction index showed a year-on-year rise from 0.27 to 0.36 in 1998 (on a scale from -2 to +2). Scores were particularly high for "Awareness of Company Vision and Values" and "Awareness of Company Goals". We improved markedly in giving clear job objectives and responsibilities, informing employees of company news and plans and people feel adequately trained. And finally - the analysis showed much higher satisfaction levels among our sales service staff - which is good for them personally, good for the company and good for our customers.

Contract Management in a Safe Pair of Hands

We know from our experience as the largest UK brick and stone manufacturer, the very close and sustained attention to detail needed for major projects. The introduction of Contract Management at Ibstock enables these complex, high volume, high value contracts to receive

Steve Poulter, Group Contract Management Sales Manager, (pictured) works closely with selected projects and develops close working relationships with the major contractors. With almost 30 years in bricks, Steve's experience of working with architects, factors, merchants and contractors provides the ideal background.

"Contract Management is about having a very clear understanding of what is expected, right from the

dedicated attention from start to finish.



Steve Poulter, Group Contract Management
Sales Manager

what is expected - right from the earliest design stage. This enables me to identify and meet the contractor's needs throughout the construction period. By doing this in a very proactive way and setting up good internal and external communications, it results in added value for everyone".

Many of our competitors claim they can't afford this added value service, but at Ibstock we feel it is an opportunity to provide real customer benefits - in terms of cost savings, delay avoidance, improved quality and service levels.

For more information on Contact Management, contact Steve Poulter on **01922 708012**.

Site Manager of the Year Awards

Quality brickwork depends on quality product with quality workmanship and supervision on site. So we were specially gratified to share in the success of Taywood Homes in the NHBC Site Manager of the Year Award.

Lesley Jones, (Divisional Sales Manager, London) received NHBC certificates which recognise the support provided at two Taywood sites, enabling the site managers to achieve quality awards.

The two sites are Fairford Leas, at Coldharbour Farm, Aylesbury, where we are supplying Laybrook Multi stock bricks and Tudor Leas in Cheshunt, using Arundel Yellow and Sevenoaks Yellow stocks from Laybrook and Bexhill Red stocks from Ashdown.



The award winning site managers, Jim O'Conner for the Aylesbury development and Steve Binding for Cheshunt, have gone on to the finals of Site Manager of the Year Award.

Winning Ways

The Continuous Improvement

Process on which we embarked in 1997 is central to Ibstock's future and effective communications are central to CI. So we were delighted with the communications award for the quality of our CI publication 'The Continuous Improvement Handbook and Pocket Guide'. The Handbook and Pocket Guide won the category 'Manual/Technical Publication of the Year' in the 1998 Technical and Charity Publishing Awards, which recognised quality and innovation in communicating information.

The Handbook and Pocket Guide, as the judge's remarks explained, "were created to promote Ibstock's Continuous Improvement Strategy and explain the key tools and techniques used in this campaign". They found much to praise in the clear layout and typography and the use of diagrams and icons to explain the concepts and process tools.



The Award was presented to Ibstock's Marketing Manager, Jamie Pickles and Manufacturing CI Team Leader, Martin Crosby by Anke Harris, President of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators, one of the Awards sponsors.

The Awards scheme was organised by Popular Communication Courses Limited.

Total Special Solutions



WITH:

EX-STOCK AVAILABILITY of the 14 best selling special shapes (+ fittings) in red and blue smooth together with the most popular product types.

TEN WORKING DAYS

DELIVERY OR 3 DAY

EMERGENCY SERVICE for

Cut and Bond in all product types.

THAT'S IN ADDITION TO:

NATION-WIDE SALES

SUPPORT - through our highly trained specials co-ordinators located at all sales offices and our field sales force.

DESIGN AND TECHNICAL

ADVICE - through our experienced team of qualified design advisors, to help you with effective design and technical solutions to detailing issues.

From the people who brought you commission on key product specials and nation-wide Cut and Bond Centres, the latest initiative Total Specials Solutions. Customers want quality specials to be available when they are required (not 6 to 12 weeks later), without hassle and at a fair price. Ibstock's Total Specials Solutions offer just that.

CUT AND BOND

WARRANTY - Cut and Bonded special shapes produced by Ibstock carry the same performance warranty as special shapes produced by normal manufacturing techniques.

For further advice contact your local specials co-ordinator on **0870 903 4000** for your Total Specials Solutions.



Educating children in safety is not a new concept, but having a permanent regional centre for young people most certainly is. The Streetwise Centre which opened in Bournemouth last November is a pioneering idea to help kids cope with the hazards of modern life - both in the home and outside. Ibstock has been happy to support this worthwhile and original venture with commercial sponsorship. It is in effect a virtual world - but in real bricks and mortar. Once through the briefing area visitors proceed to the main hall where they are transported into a busy, colourful world with a high street, shops, offices, a park, a beach, a railway and a farm yard. Most impressively, there is a life-sized house complete with fully furnished rooms and its own garage. Each of these areas allow youngsters to participate in interactive scenarios that teach them vital safety lessons - in other words, how to become 'streetwise'. They can learn how to deal with



Pictured inside the Centre are the Ibstock team involved in the project. Standing L to R: Graham Jackson, Peter England, Denis Smith, Keith Morton. Kneeling L to R: Nick Downes and Ken Smith

Pictured below are the Chief Constable of Dorset, Nick Aldous and Graham Jackson, Ibstock Sales

accidents in the home, how to call for help and how to cope until it arrives. The railway scenario shows the danger of playing on the track while the park and the beach provide a perfect environment to explain 'Stranger Danger' and water safety.

The local NHS Trust and emergency services are heavily involved on the team responsible for getting the centre on its feet. 'Streetwise' has been built at minimal cost, with an almost 'Challenge Anneka' spirit prevailing from all involved.

DIK AIGOUS and GRAHAM JACKSON, IOSTOCK Sales Representative, South West.



Architectural Terracotta - Think about it

Think restoration, think newbuild, think colour, think texture, think glazed brick. Think Istock Hatherware - the modern face of architectural terracotta and faience.



This is an industry that all but died out, The vogue for these products - durable and economic alternatives to natural stone - peaked in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. Terracotta, being easily mouldable, lent itself to the ornamentation favoured by the architects of the time and the acid resistant clay body was resistant to sulphur laden and sooty urban atmospheres. By the 1970's these buildings began to need restoration, but by then the industry and the skills it had nurtured had almost vanished, victim of economic austerity, two world wars and changing architectural fashion. But Hatherware, founded in 1874, had survived, by diversifying into industrial ceramics. The company has revived craft skills, trained new blood and developed new body clays and glazes along with design and technical expertise needed to use terracotta in today's context. This process was given added impetus and resource with the incorporation into Istock in 1990. We have all the skills needed for sympathetic restoration of historic facades - but why confine terracotta to the past? Colour, finish and texture make terracotta an exciting material to work with creatively. It has immense potential for today.

For further information on Ibstock
Hathernware, call David Maddocks
on **01509 842273**



[Top of page](#)