



Newsletter 2017

PAUL LUFF TAKES OVER AS CHAIRMAN



Thank you to Ian Kershaw

As 2017 draws to a close, the TTA is able to announce that it has a new chairman, Paul Luff.

After six years in the role Ian Kershaw is standing down, and the whole Board and membership will wish to express their thanks to Ian for successfully guiding the Association through a time of great change. It has been a period during which the TTA has developed enormously – gaining membership, increasing in professionalism and embracing the digital age, while also continuing to drive up standards in the industry and support the members.

This has led to the development of new services and also increasing influence both nationally and globally in the development of Standards and test methods.

Paul Luff comes into the role after being a TTA director since 2012. He is sales & marketing manager for the Tiling and Flooring Division of Belfast-based Larsen Building Products. "I greatly relish the challenge of heading up the TTA for the next two years," he says. "Ian will be a hard act to follow and I wish to add my thanks to those of others for all that he has done for the TTA over the past six years. Looking to the future, I feel that we are entering a very exciting phase in the development of the Association, with all sorts of "unknowns" out there in the wider construction context, but with a TTA which is in a very strong position. We have a strong membership base, a great portfolio of member services and a very strong technical capability within our various committees. So I look forward to working with all of you to build on our strengths and develop that further."

Other changes within the Board over the past year have included the departure of Peter Bell, who has assumed further responsibilities within the BAL and ARDEX group, putting more pressure on the time he would otherwise have liked to devote to the TTA. So many thanks to him for his work over the years.

The Board has however been able to welcome an ARDEX colleague during the year, when Lee Kidd joined. So a warm welcome to him and also to Brian Linnington of Topps Tiles, who joined the Board shortly after his company signed up into membership early in the year.

TTA undoubtedly has a highly capable and committed Board, all of whom give up their time for no remuneration for the benefit of the members, the Association and the industry as a whole. Many of them also participate in the various committees and working groups which the TTA has set up in order to further the interests of the membership in a wide variety of specific areas.

During the past year, our industry has once again shown that it is dynamic and fast changing, with a number of acquisitions, consolidations and innovations. Our aim is constantly to keep abreast of these changes, to adapt where necessary and keep ahead of the game, so that we can continue to provide the best services for our members and act as the voice of the industry.

The TTA is also an open and welcoming organisation; we are always looking for members who would like to get involved in our work by joining one of the committees. These are vital, not only to the running of the TTA, but also for driving up standards and improving training within the industry.

If you would like to register your interest, please email us at support@tile.org.uk



Welcome to Paul Luff

INDEPENDENT FIXERS URGED TO BE PART OF THE TILE ASSOCIATION

The TTA has long recognised that independent fixers are key to the success of the Association going forward. Although they may not have the biggest budgets, they have a vast amount to contribute in terms of personal commitment. They also have plenty to get out of their membership, in terms of all the benefits that TTA membership has to offer.

In recognition of this, Independent Fixer membership for 2018 will be **even better value**, as we are freezing membership rates for this category once again – and will also no longer charge the one-off administration fee for new members. Independent Fixer members will once again pay **£195 + VAT** for the year, while contractor company rates start at **£242 + VAT** and up, depending on the size of the business.

PHONE A FRIEND!

The TTA is also continuing its membership recruitment incentive, which could see lucky TTA members winning **£25 M&S** vouchers for their efforts! This is open to existing TTA members in all categories. All you have to do is propose another business or tiler for membership in any category. Once that application is approved and the new member is signed up then the reward is offered.



TTA grows from strength to strength

The year has been a good one for new membership applications, with the first three months of the year seeing a 143% increase in membership applications – a trend which continued throughout the year. The new memberships are coming from all categories of member, but in particular from independent fixers and contractors, no doubt reflecting the many benefits to which they are entitled. These include the provision of sales leads, technical and business support and training, as well as the level of reassurance that TTA membership provides to customers.

All members receive an annual membership certificate to display on your premises and a membership card for easy reference to your website log-in details and the business helpline numbers.



TTA secures CITB funding to assist fixers to gain their CSCS cards



CITB funding secured by the TTA is to assist fixers gain their CSCS cards.

Funding secured from the CITB has enabled the provision of an assessor infrastructure for the wall and floor tiling sector across the UK to support quality assured assessment of experienced operatives to NVQ L2. Part funding is also available for NVQ EWP/OSAT training, which will help fixers obtain their CSCS cards.

Having independent NVQ assessors will help the TTA strengthen its training activities and make it easier for companies and independent fixers to access the training support they need, and the aim is that eight new NVQ assessors will be trained over the next 18 months.

This initiative will benefit the industry by promoting and supporting a skilled and qualified workforce, which will

stimulate the market by providing a route to qualification for experienced operatives via on-site assessment.

The training comprises a one-day course which can be carried out at either of BAL's Training Centres, which are located in Stoke-on-Trent and Bristol. Assessors can also visit customers on-site, although there would be an additional charge for this.

The training costs £500 for TTA members and £600 for non-TTA members. Both are subject to a £68 registration fee. On successful completion of the course, candidates will receive a refund of £210 of their fee. Independent fixers are entitled to claim a £100 refund if they join the TTA.

The first sessions took place in November and December. Anyone interested in further sessions should contact Elaine Proctor at the TTA on support@tile.org.uk or by telephoning 0300 365 8453.

The TTA Awards 2018 - Now is your chance!



If you or your business have achieved something to be proud of in the past year, whether it is a particular initiative, a new product, a project or a member of the team who deserves special recognition, you should consider entering the Awards. But you will have to be quick, as entries will be closing very soon. To enter please use the online entry form which is to be found on the homepage of the dedicated TTA Awards website www.ttaawards.com. Or if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Awards team at head office.

The TTA is launching two exciting new events to take place alongside the Awards next year. Firstly the Tile Association Tiling Show is to take place from 10am on Friday 18 May at the same venue which will host the Awards that evening. All Gold sponsors will be entitled to space at the new Show, which is also being opened up to other TTA member companies to enable them to participate. All exhibitors will get a 2-metre space, which will cost just £75 + VAT for participants who are not Gold sponsors.

"The Tile Association Tiling Show will be an exciting new addition to complement our annual TTA Awards celebration," says Paul Luff, incoming TTA Chairman.

"This is another great reason to come along to the Awards and also gives TTA members an excellent new way to promote their products and services to the industry. We hope that members will seize this opportunity and

help make the Tile Association Tiling Show a big success in its first year."

Meanwhile the TTA is to host a full programme of CPD presentations from member companies on the same day. This will be opened up to architects and specifiers who are looking to update their CPD credentials in the tiling sector, by attending one or more of the 45 minute RIBA-accredited seminars which will be taking place during the day.

All Gold sponsors of the Awards will be entitled to make a CPD presentation and it is intended "The TTA has a very clear commitment to supporting the CPD work of its members and promoting continuous professional development throughout the industry as a whole," says Paul Luff, incoming TTA chairman. "This is why earlier this year we attained RIBA accreditation for the whole body of TTA technical publications, which are now available to registered architects and specifiers for free download from the TTA website. Our planned CPD sessions at the Awards take this work on to the next stage and will help make RIBA-accredited CPD information available to a wider audience of specifiers."

The TTA is delighted to confirm the following Gold sponsors for the Awards: BAL, Instarmac, N&C Nicobond, Norcos Adhesives, Shackerley (Holdings) Group Ltd and Trimline Group.

TTA supports progress towards Trailblazer Apprenticeships



The TTA is continuing to support its members in the development of the new Trailblazer Apprenticeship for Wall & Floor Tiling. The Employers' Working Group, supported by the TTA, is looking to develop an End Point Assessment (EPA) for the new Apprenticeship. The framework for this was approved in May 2017.

All 16 TTA member colleges are invited to take part in this process. Special thanks to Southern Regional College (Northern Ireland), Leeds College and South & City College Birmingham, who have been enthusiastically involved in this work so far.

We are also looking for feedback from contractors, regarding what they want to see included in the apprenticeship, whether it is course content, health & safety, theory of tiling or any other comment regarding the Trailblazer.

According to the current timescale, it is hoped to have the Apprenticeship validated by the Institute for Apprenticeships (part of the Department of Education) in the first half of the year, so that it is in place for September 2018 in time for the new academic year.

"This has been an exciting initiative for the TTA to be involved in," says Bob Howard MBE, chairman of the TTA Training Committee. "It represents our contribution to providing a qualified workforce for the future and it will also provide a recognised syllabus and qualification for all those who are new to our industry or who need to increase their skill levels."



Would you like to get involved in TTA committees?

We are always looking for members who would like to get involved in the work of The Tile Association by joining one of our committees.

These committees are vital, not only to the running of the TTA, but also for driving up standards and improving training within the industry. If you would like to register your interest, please email us at support@tile.org.uk



TTA joins the Construction Products Association



The TTA is pleased to announce that it has joined the Construction Products Association (CPA).

The CPA promotes and campaigns for construction product manufacturers and distributors, championing members' interests across the manufacturing and construction sectors. Many of the largest construction companies and many trade associations are members. The ability of the CPA and the TTA to carry out joint lobbying on issues of interest to TTA members will be a significant benefit. The TTA's membership of the CPA will ensure that the voice of the tiling industry is heard in all lobbying and campaign work that the CPA is carrying out with Government, as well as UK and international regulatory bodies.

The TTA will also be able to access CPA economic forecasts, industry surveys, market information, the Weekly Notes newsletter and other reports of interest. While some of

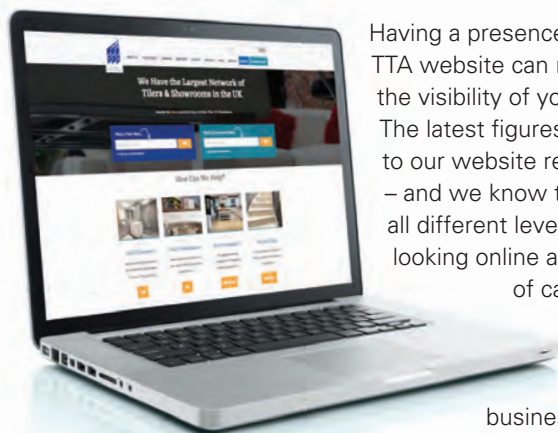
this information is put in the public domain, there will also be access to members-only content on the CPA website, including committee papers, surveys, working documents and briefing materials.

Membership will also enable the TTA to call on the expertise of CPA staff for help on economic, technical, regulatory, sustainability and policy matters, including advance warnings on relevant issues. It will also give the TTA a place on the Trade Association Council, one of the two main committees of the CPA.

"The Construction Products Association is an influential and respected industry body representing the entire sector and encouraging deeper cooperation across industry and with Government, so it is right that the TTA should be a part of that," says Paul Luff, incoming TTA chairman. "I look forward to the TTA playing a constructive role in CPA activities going forward and ensuring that the interests of our tiling industry members are fully represented."

Other associations that the TTA is involved with include: Build UK, RIBA CPD Providers Network, EUF (Federation of European Fixers), CITB and The Trade Association Forum.

Investing online to support your business



Having a presence on the TTA website can really help the visibility of your business. The latest figures for traffic to our website really bear this out – and we know that customers at all different levels are increasingly looking online as their first port of call for information on suppliers, products and prospective business partners.

Looking across the whole website, www.tiles.org.uk, the monthly hits on all types of listing, whether fixers, retailers, manufacturers, distributors, is averaging 10,500 each month.

Looking at specific areas of the site, the monthly conversion rate is as follows:

Find a Tiler: 1,500

Find a Tile: 1,300

Find a Showroom: 500

There is no let-up in the importance of online sales, marketing and technical information for the tiling industry. Having a presence on the TTA website enables you to stay ahead of the game. Our members are frequently telling us that they have gained additional business through their presence on the website. When this is compounded by the additional exposure that can be gained from such activities

as a TTA Award entry, the benefits in terms of new business contacts are even greater.

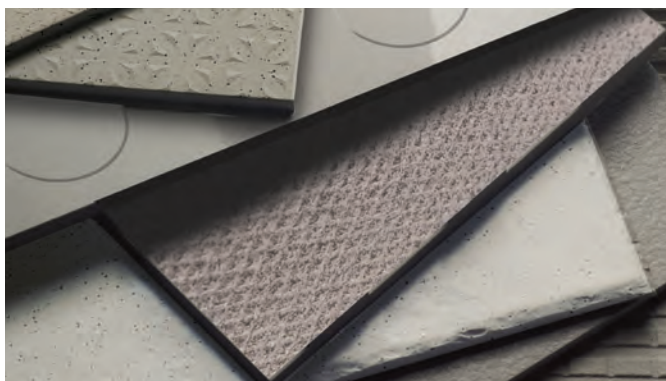
All members are entitled to a free listing on the site. This Directory section is designed to be easy to navigate, so that your customers can find your key information as easily as possible. The homepage also features two large central buttons: Find a Tiler and Find a Showroom, in order to make it easier for the customer to find what they are looking for, whether it is a stockist, distributor, manufacturer or a fixer. Following significant investment in SEO to increase the website performance, The TTA is now ranking on the first page of Google for terms such as 'find a tiler', 'find a tile fitter', 'tiler directory', 'tile fitter', 'tiling showrooms', 'tile stockists' and 'tile accessories stockists'. All TTA websites are equally accessible on desktop and mobile devices. Please make sure your listings are up to date!

As a member, you need to be sure you have your personal logins for the TTA website. This will give you access to the members' area of the site, from where you can download technical information free of charge and update your personal profile.



The TTA's various online platforms are linked in a logical way, so that many of the articles in Tilezine are promoted on social media and TTA news also appears on the main website. Members' tweets are promoted on Twitter if @tileassociation is tagged, and has more than 4,000 followers. If we're not following you, let us know your social media feeds. Follow @ttaawards for all news and promotion related to the Awards. Also check out the TTA pages on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn for the latest information.

TTA launches new Pendulum slip testing facility for tiles



TTA has introduced a new slip resistance testing facility for tiles. Ceramic tiles are not inherently slippery when clean and dry, but the slip resistance of any type of floor covering can significantly reduce if it becomes contaminated by any form of lubricant, such as water or dust, depending upon the floor's surface texture and footwear used.

Brian Newell, chairman of the TTA's Technical Committee, says that the opening of the TTA's own facility is an important step forward. "Up until now there has been a lack of consistency of test methods available for the industry to use. Our own facility will be available for use by TTA members, mainly importers and distributors, and will use the Pendulum method, which we firmly believe to be the best."

Users of the new TTA facility can be confident that they are buying into a credible testing method, which is widely recognized and stands every chance of being incorporated into a new ISO standard. Testing is available to TTA members only and costs £120 + VAT per test.

New Technical Publications from the TTA

The TTA continues to fulfill its remit to supply the most authoritative technical publications for the tiling industry. This year it has published two new documents:

1. Ceramic and Natural Stone Floor Tiling to Acoustic Systems
2. The Installation and Use of Uncoupling Membranes for Internal Floor Tiling

These are available for download from the TTA website by registered architects and specifiers.

TTA Technical Working Groups will be compiling two new publications early in 2018. These are:

1. Guide to the Installation and Fixing of Natural Stone Tiles and Slabs to Internal Walls and Floors. This publication is being produced in co-operation with Stone Federation GB Ltd and The British Adhesives and Sealants Association.
2. External Floor tiling to Balconies, Terraces and Patios.

There will be advertising opportunities available within these new publications, which are sure to be well-read by an influential specifier audience. Anyone interested in such opportunities should contact Elaine Proctor at the TTA on support@tile.org.uk or by telephoning 0300 365 8453.

Improvements to TTA's Technical Inspection Service

The TTA is making some improvements to its Technical Inspection Service. It is introducing a new category for domestic inspections, which are considered to be those up to 25m² comprising a single area of floor or wall space, such as a hallway or bathroom. These are priced at £746 + VAT. Meanwhile the cost for inspections of larger floor areas, considered to be commercial, are seeing a small increase. Inspections for areas larger than 25m² start at £980 + VAT.

The TTA's Technical Inspection service is excellent value for all users and is available to anyone who has concerns about tiling work. Under the terms of the service one of TTA's highly experienced technical inspectors can visit a site to inspect any tiling installation. The inspector will assess the job against relevant British and European Standards and provide a detailed written report of the inspection with their findings and a conclusion. This report can be used in court as evidence, should any dispute go to that level.

Full details of pricing are available on a dedicated section of TTA's website. Anyone who requires to access the service should fill in a Technical Inspection booking form (also available on the site), and TTA staff will be in contact to confirm further details.



Are you using all your benefits?

Membership of the TTA has plenty of benefits for members. Please make sure that you are aware of them and making use of them.

Our insurance partner, Jelf, offers a range of excellent insurance services for businesses. It is definitely worth contacting them and discussing the deals that they have on offer. Independent fixer members who take out public liability insurance with Jelf are entitled to a £50 cashback from the TTA on their membership fees.

Additionally all TTA members receive a free annual subscription to the leading industry magazines Tile & Stone Journal and Contract Flooring Journal.



You will also receive our Tilezine e-newsletter, which goes out fortnightly to over 2,500 subscribers, bringing you the latest news from the TTA and from

the wider industry. Look out for some exciting developments on Tilezine, planned for the coming year. You will find that the e-newsletter and the Tilezine website work equally well on both desktop and mobile devices – so you can catch up with the news on the go! The content from each issue is stored on the Tilezine website at www.tilezine.co.uk – so this is now a valuable and growing source of information about the tiling sector. It is also searchable, enabling readers to find information easily about the companies and subjects that interest them. We are always looking for content, so please send in your business news, events, appointments, vacancies and more. There are also advertising opportunities with Tilezine. Make sure to get your products and services in front of our influential readership! For more information about either editorial or advertising opportunities please email: news@tilezine.co.uk

Independent fixers and tiling contractors are eligible to apply for their Registered Tile Fixer Card. This provides peace of mind for customers, who will know that they are dealing with an approved and trusted tile fixer. The Card is supplied free of charge as part of your membership. If you would like to receive yours, please provide us with a head-and-shoulders photograph of yourself as a .jpg file and we will print and forward your card.



As a member, we can also provide the Tile Association logo to be used on business stationery, advertisements, websites, products and vehicles.

You also get a free listing in the business directory on our website, which gets tens of thousands of views each month and helps to generate leads for your business. An enhanced listing is also available for a small charge.

The full range of CPD-accredited TTA Technical Publications is available for you to download free of charge from our website, with our technical helpline also available free of charge to members.



We offer support with free business advice helplines covering tax, HR, legal and safety help available. Please ask for more information or log in to the member's area of the website. Your login details are shown on your membership card.



We can also offer meeting facilities to our members at our headquarters in Staffordshire. A small meeting room, seating up to six people, is free for members to use for up to four hours. We also have larger meeting rooms and a training room which are available to hire at discounted rates.

Improved Data Protection is coming

Data protection regulations changed significantly in May 2016 – and companies need to do the work now to make sure that they comply by May 2018.

It is now 27 years since the Data Protection Act came into law. That was considerably before the internet became the enormous part of all our lives and of everyday business activities that it is today. It is not surprising therefore that the original regulations are no longer considered to be fit for purpose.

The TTA is taking a lead on ensuring that member companies and individuals are equipped to make any necessary changes to the way they collect, handle and store customer and employee data.

The TTA also has to make some changes to the way we handle the data collected from you, our members. One of the key requirements is that organisations can no longer make assumptions about how individuals want their data to be dealt with. For instance, pre-ticked opt-in boxes are not considered valid methods of consent. Individuals must now pro-actively state their agreement for their data to be held and used in particular ways.

To ensure we have all your up to date information – please complete and return the enclosed Data Collection Form.



Anti-dumping measures renewed for a further five years

Many thanks to all those members who participated in our survey early in 2017, which sought to gauge the views of members on the continuation of import tariffs against Chinese manufacturers of ceramic wall and floor tiles. A sizeable majority of respondents were in favour of the tariffs continuing and also believed that the level of tariff was about right. Only a minority, however, were in favour of extending the tariffs to natural stone wall and floor tiles.

The European Commission has now decided to extend the duties levied on Chinese ceramic tile imports for a further five years to November 2022. The tariff will be at the same level as previously since 2011 (ranging between 30.6% and 69.7% depending on whether the Chinese exporters cooperated with the investigations or not.)

The review has taken more than a year and found in favour of the European ceramics industry represented by the European Ceramic Tile Manufacturers' Federation CET. There was a focus on the continued practice of dumping by Chinese exporters, as well as the level of China's overcapacity, equivalent to four times the EU's entire tile output.

In view of Brexit, the UK will now have an option of whether to follow the EU tariff, or to set its own in individual discussions with China. So the industry needs good transitional arrangements in place during the process of exiting the EU, to ensure that the interests of the few remaining UK manufacturers are protected as far as possible.



If we may be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address below or email support@tile.org.uk