

Help and advice from your trusted local MasterBond Builder



Beware of Rogue Traders!

Doorstep callers or Rogue Traders choose January and February to cold call homeowners as they know it's the time when people are considering home improvements for the coming year. The FMB says NEVER employ anyone who cold calls at your door.

"Do not engage in conversation with a cold caller. If they can start immediately, there is usually a reason. If they only deal in cash, they are unlikely to be a legitimate company," warns the FMB. "If you do employ a cowboy, it could cost you far more to get the job rectified when it all goes wrong!"



The FMB's five simple steps to employing a professional local builder:

1. Be specific and set out a detailed, clear brief when requesting quotes.
2. Ask friends and family for a recommendation and check the FMB's 'Find A Builder' service at www.fmb.org.uk.
3. Seek at least three references, speak to previous clients and visit previous jobs.
4. Don't just go with the cheapest, consider your ability to communicate with them and the quality of their work.
5. Always have a written contract as it offers you protection and piece of mind. All Helm work is undertaken using the FMB Plain English Contract, and all work is covered by a 6 year FMB Masterbond Warranty.

HELM SEASONAL ADVICE



Warm Up Your Home

January's freezing temperatures and icy winds not only chill fingers and toes, but also test a home's insulation and heating. Rather than simply pressing the override button on the heating system, consider other ways of warming up your home.

25% of heat escapes through the roof and 35% through the walls. You can make a big difference to the temperature of a house and keep heating costs down by increasing the insulation, fitting draughtproofing on windows and doors and upgrading the boiler and heating system.

Quick DIY jobs include fitting a jacket on the hot water tank, draughtproofing around windows, doors, letterboxes and between floorboards.

But to really make a difference, it's worth talking to a local Masterbond builder about insulating your loft, installing cavity wall insulation or solid wall insulation, double glazing, upgrading your central heating system, under floor heating and installing heating controls for each room.

Helm's top 10 environmentally friendly ways to improve new house building projects

- Increase external wall cavities by an extra 10mm. This improves the insulative properties by 30% with no additional building cost.
- Insulation can be further improved by using high retention and reflective double glazing materials.
- Use solar panels on south facing roofs to provide free hot water. Helm recommend VELUX Solar Panel systems.
- Install energy efficient SAP approved electric underfloor heating such as Vysal's MyHeat system.
- Heating efficiency can be further improved by the use of a heat retentive multi-particle screed.
- Only use recycled aggregates and FSC (sustainable forest) approved timber.
- Segregate all waste and recycle wherever possible to reduce impact on landfill sites.
- Deliver materials to site from local companies using a 'full-load' system.
- Block drives should use loose-lay permeable materials to reduce impact on existing drains.
- Always employ builders who are members of the government backed "Envirowise" scheme.

If you require any advice or information regarding your own building project, call FREEPHONE 08080 333 333, or visit www.helm.uk.com

HELM FEATURED ACCREDITATION



Envirowise was established to help associated businesses like Helm become more resource efficient and save money, to comply with new regulations. These regulations help Helm improve energy efficiency, reduce environmental impact, pollution, packaging waste and raw materials used, the disposal of hazardous waste and waste management, and the reduction of water wastage using water saving devices and practices.