



The chief executive of ficer: **Richard Catt**

Roll up for the FITA 'winter promotion'

DESPITE the financial climate FITA delivered more training in the final quarter of 2008 than the previous two years. Safety and smooth vinyl (commercial) is still popular and we recently ran a course at Polyflor's training centre in Manchester.

Our thanks to Eddie Pannett (training centre manager) and the Polyflor team who assisted our instructors, Nigel Tucker and Adrian May.

Before Christmas, the FITA council and I reviewed 2009 plans and considered how else we might assist the trade, through training, to weather the current storm. Our first initiative, a winter

promotion, offers our sanding and sealing course at a reduced price. For a limited period we are offering a two-day course at a total cost of £250 plus VAT, in other words £125 per day.

We have a sanding and sealing course after an intermediate wood course, so you can add a new 'package' and revenue stream to your business. Instructors at our sanding and sealing course are industry experts Wayne Haslam (from Junkers) and



A FITA course at Polyflor



All set for the sanding and sealing course

Peter Roesse (KHR company) who provide the ideal balance of experience in finishes and machinery.

As with all FITA courses, they teach a generic syllabus, so provide a full picture of the skills and options that can be applied.

Having all the requisite skills to tender, or respond positively to business opportunities, must be an advantage. As the leading training provider, FITA courses of this in bite sized packages. Short courses tailored to the main material types and skill levels. Look out for the FITA advert or visit www.fita.co.uk for a full list of course dates and prices.

■ CFA and NICF members now receive a 15% discount on standard course prices.

2008 was a great year for FITA which delivered superb training. We have all the key components in place to make 2009 even better. No article on FITA would be complete without a mention of our main sponsors, to whom we owe a great deal: Balterio, F Ball & Co, Blaklader and John Butler Contracts, not forgetting many other companies who provide us with help and support.

Book early to avoid disappointment!



The president: **John Alcock**

New Year resolution in site?

THE New Year brings motivation for change; the resolutions we set at this time all too often fade from memory before January ends! So what about my New Year hopes for the flooring industry?

I recently visited a refurb job in the North West, a great looking public sector project and they'd obviously spent a great deal of money on the design, the lights, the walls, the decoration, etc.

But when I looked at the floor there was no base DPM. There was a look of horror when I advised using a surface DPM.

It's daft when you think about it. The floor is the finish in the building that gets the most use and should therefore be right from the start.

I think the problem is that the floor is under foot and as few people walk around staring at the ground it is easily overlooked.

This might explain why one of my particular bugbears – site conditions – never seems to improve and is the first thing I'd like to see change.

We've all been on site, having to install a floor whilst walls are going up, paint is being applied; it amuses me to see carpet being laid whilst a building is effectively still a building site, and although there is occasionally some effort to scatter cardboard walkways, it means serious cleaning ahead, if not complete replacement.

So how do we change this? The trouble is that the problem doesn't lie with just one person. It's more to do with the overall system and, as I say, a lack of appreciation of the importance of the floor to the entire building.

In my ideal world the installer arrives on site last and has a well

prepared, clean, swept and up-to-temperature area available that makes the flooring installation simplicity.

Sadly, the reality is shoe-horning flooring installation alongside all other building work so that deadlines are met. Inevitably corners will be cut, mistakes will be made and medium to long-term costly problems will occur.

Site conditions is one of the areas the CFA is highlighting, but any change will take an active shift of attitude from all areas of construction.

It requires the installer to lobby and seek better conditions. The main contractor also has to appreciate the needs of the installer. It will take willpower, you might say, but the lack of it is sadly why most New Year's resolutions fail?

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