

Now in our 30th Year of successfully supplying quality uPVC and aluminium windows, doors and conservatories

Winter 2022/23

Happy New Year 202



Happy New Year to you all.

2023 is now upon us and we are all wondering where this year is going to take us! On a positive note it's our 30th birthday year!

30 years since Steve Barker and Phil Bates opened the business in a small factory unit in Southend with a handful of staff manufacturing

50 white window frames a week. How things have changed!

So, what did 2022 bring for the Climatec Group? Well, there were certainly some concerns that 2022 would see a downturn in business for us all following the increased orders in 2021 after the covid pandemic. Thankfully, however this seemed to be unfounded as the orders continued to roll in and in the main we were as busy as ever with customers both new and old still ordering from us, which of course is much appreciated.

Unfortunately, due to the economic climate and the increased costs in materials and overhead expenditure, we did regrettably have to increase our prices which now, industry wide, seems to be a common occurrence. Of course there are no guarantees in what 2023 is likely to bring either, nevertheless we will continue to monitor the situation and endeavour to keep any price increases should the need arise to a minimum. We will keep you updated and communicate if there should be any changes.

Hopefully 2023 will continue in the same vein for the window industry, although there must be an element of doubt with the current cloud hanging over the economy and the possibility of both homeowners and commercial contractors tightening their belts. However, a major pandemic like Covid didn't seem to stop the orders from coming in so perhaps there is a reason to remain optimistic!

As we start 2023, we certainly like to remain positive. We are investing in both new machinery and factory space to increase our overall manufacturing capabilities further and also possibly the product range that we offer.

IT'S OUR BIRTHDAY!



Climatec Windows Ltd

How many of our customers recognise the logo above? If you do, then you must be one of our first customers back when Steve Barker and Phil Bates started the business in 1993.

In March this year Steve and Phil will celebrate their 30th year in business. The Climatec Group is now home to the uPVC (Climatec Windows Ltd) and aluminium (Alutec UK Ltd) manufacturing companies, as well as our local retail arm, Climatec Home Improvements.

Inside this issue of Vista we celebrate all that is 'The Group'; the achievements and milestones, the people and the processes as we say Happy Birthday to us.





Manufacturers and suppliers for the window industry

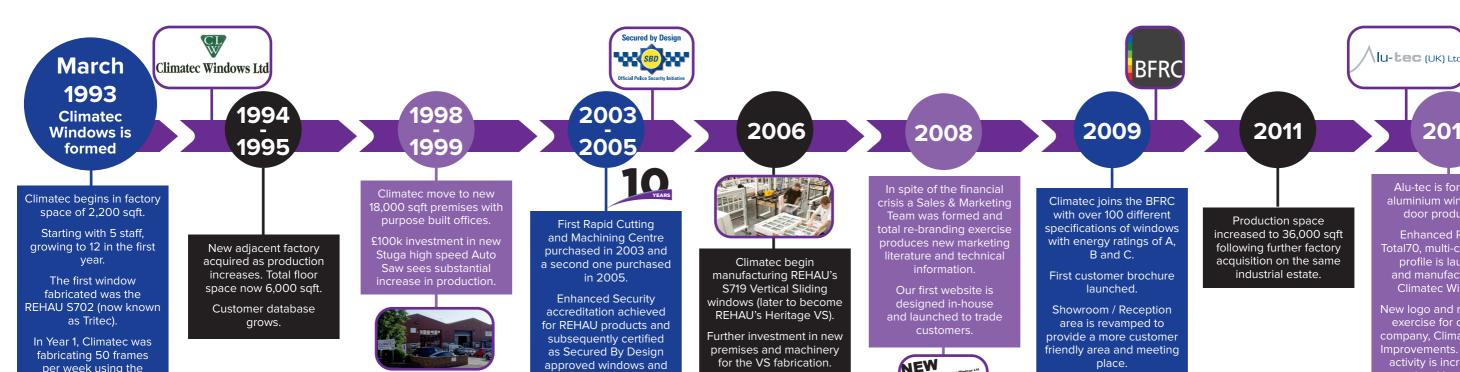
Specialising in UPVC and Aluminium products for the retail and commercial markets



www.climatec-windows.co.uk Tel: 01702 613733



www.alu-tec.co.uk Tel: 01702 899440



doors. Climatec Climatec Alu-tec C#VID-19

Alu-tec is formed for door production.

2013

Enhanced REHAU Total70, multi-chambered profile is launched and manufactured by Climatec Windows.

New logo and rebranding company, Climatec Home Improvements. Marketing activity is increased to target local homeowners

Our products become CE Marked as per new

Fully operational uPVC production.

2021 2020 2019 2018 2016 2014 2017 2015

Climatec

Production staff

REHAU S702 and S706 (chamfered frames) for

approx 15-20 customers.

Alu-tec Increase their actory and Office Space and 4 new office staff

Investment of £500k in machinery - we now have four automated cutting and machining ines which together are capable of processing up to 2000 frames per

New products launched: Smart door handle and lock from Brisant/Ultion - Installation trims. **Endurance** composite

Showrooms begin to open following the Covid pandemic and demands for products grow.

UPVC shortage due to lack of raw materials affect whole industry

AluK launch a whole new colour spectrum – 66 colours and finishes.

Fully Integrated Window Designer Software upgrade purchased for use by staff internally and customers alike.

Purchase of new welders including our first 5 head welding machine.

The year of COVID.

New working practices put in place as per government guidelines. Business continues despite the pandemic and supplier issues.

Alu-tec launch the aluminium flush window from AluK

Climatec Windows launch the REHAU Rio Flush Sash windows options available, Full Mechanical, Fully Welded or ETL Welded

Alu-tec manufacture their first AluK Infinium Sliding



25 years in and there is a totally new look for our three companies. Climatec Windows, Alu-tec UK and Climatec Home Improvements become The Climatec Group of companies and each have a new logo and website.

New sliding doors launched - Deceuninck Slider 24 for Climatec Windows and the AluK BSC94 Lift & Slide for Alu-tec.

Climatec Group achieves BSi accreditation on their uPVC and Aluminium products

Climatec Windows start producina Residence R7 fully flush windows and doors

Alu-tec obtained further manufacturing space increasing their factory floor space to 18,000 sqft

> Climatec start manufacturing the Residence R9 Flush products

Showroom gets a facelift to include aluminium products and Period Doors.

ETL Weld introduced for easier fabrication and installation of flush windows on site.

Full suite of traditional styled hardware launched for extra authenticity for new flush products.

Climatec's new Period Door Collection is aunched at the 2016 FIT Show exhibition.

New investment plan to increase productivity sees acquisition of a CNC Routing Machine for Alu-tec factory and a Stuga Autoflow 2 for Climatec Windows.

Alu-tec launch a Contemporary Aluminium Door Collection.

Two additional 7.5 tonne trucks added to our leet to improve delivery

Aluminium bi-fold manufacture sees huge growth for Alutec. Production figures increase greatly following Alu-tec's factory refurbishment and the acquisition of two new units (12,000 sqft).

The total factory space for Climatec and Alu-tec now 48,000 sqft.

Climatec Windows are one of the first companies to achieve CE Marking on Panic Exit Doors.

Calibre windows achieve Secured By Design accreditation.



Aluminium production a fire in neighbouring factory unit. But fabrication continues!

March 2023 and onwards..

30th year in business

Total Customers for the Group currently 220.

Start the year by reacquiring the original factory and offices we started in in 1993.

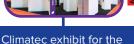
Now employ 170 staff - 4 Directors / 29 Alu-tec Production / 7 Alu-tec Office / 4 CHI Office / 29 Climatec Office Staff / 81 Climatec Production / 15 x Stores / Transport Factory space - Alu-tec 20,000sq ft / Climatec - 40,000 sq ft - with offices etc. approx. 60,000 sq ft in total.

Now Supplying REHAU, AluK, Residence, Deceuninck, Solidor, Endurance, Hurst, Hallmark, Vivalda









first time at The Fit Show with great success. A new, no frills product

range of windows and doors branded Calibre are also launched by Climatec at the exhibition

Solidor Composite Doors are introduced to our product range.

faces obstacles following



Number 1 Song in March 1993 was Oh Carolina by Shaggy (14/3/93) and Young at Heart by The Bluebells (28/03/93)

30 YEARS OF CLIMATEC 1993 - 2023

It only seems like yesterday when we were celebrating a massive 20 years in business. We were just embarking on a new venture fabricating aluminium products as Alu-tec UK and had invested in new factory space to accommodate this new business. Who knew back then how quickly these products would become so popular with homeowners, and ultimately

seeing the success and growth of Alu-tec as it is today.

At year 25, we re-branded our three companies Climatec Windows, Alu-tec UK and Climatec Home Improvements and put them under the umbrella, The Climatec Group. We had 11 factory units totalling approximately 50,000 sqft and producing on average 1400 aluminium and upvc frames a week.

Now, 30 years in, and a worldwide pandemic behind us, there's no stopping the Climatec Group. Through sheer determination and a prudent approach adopted by the Directors and management team in how the business is run over these years, we find ourselves still very much standing (in the words of Elton John) and ready to take on the next decade ahead of us.

In 1993, Steve Barker and Phil Bates began fabricating uPVC windows in a small factory unit on a Southend industrial estate with five staff members. Everyone chipped in with all aspects of the company's working processes, from fabricating, driving, office admin and we're assuming tea making too. 30 years later, at last count, the Group now employs 170 staff, has nearly 60,000 sqft of factory and office space on the same Southend industrial estate and have a fleet of vehicles to use for deliveries to their 220 trade customers.

And with a final twist for 2023, the Group have just reacquired the same factory unit and offices they began their journey in back in 1993. Currently an MOT centre, it needs a bit of tlc to get it back to a working manufacturing facility, but





as we stand at the front of this unit and look left, right and across the road we can see exactly how far (or not far in distance) Phil and Steve have come with the Climatec Group.











30 YEAR COLLABORATION WITH REHAU



The very first window to be manufactured by the newly formed Climatec Windows back in 1993 was the REHAU S702, later to be re-branded as the REHAU Tritec 60mm window. Soon to follow on the production line was the REHAU S706 Chamfered window, bringing a 70mm window to the market and boosting the sales for Climatec.

But why choose REHAU as the profile of choice at the beginning? Director and co-founder Steve Barker says "From our initial discussions with REHAU we discovered they had developed an internally beaded window which was new to the market. At that time most window manufacturers were producing externally beaded windows so this was an exciting new prospect for us. In fact we believe we may have been the first Company in the UK to manufacture the S706 System, now rebranded Total70. Setting up to produce this new product was going to be considerably more expensive due to the reverse butt weld method of construction but we decided that the investment would be worth it in the long term."

And it proved to be just that! Fast forward 30 years which now sees us manufacturing REHAU's full range of high quality windows and doors using their multi-chambered Total70 chamfered and sculptured systems, together with the flush sash RIO, Vertical Sliders from their Heritage profile as well as products from their base level Calibre System, which we helped them to develop.

The 30 year collaboration is a fantastic milestone for Climatec and REHAU and the success is down to good working relationships between the two companies. Another birthday event to shout about this year.



Thank you for giving REHAU the opportunity to take part in your 30th anniversary celebrations.

As your business partner for the last 30 years, it has been a pleasure to see Climatec's business grow from strength to strength. The collaboration of both companies during this time has resulted in a successful close working relationship based on trust, dedication and must importantly teamwork.

Over the years the marketing, sales and technical departments of each company, as well as the Directors have formed close working relationships. In particular, the long serving employees for each company have been an integral part to the success of Climatec Windows.

Congratulations to everyone at Climatec and we look forward to celebrating with you and continuing the successful business relationship that we have built together.

Barry Gilligan Sales Director and Martin Hitchin CEO





What were we watching in 1993?

The original Jurassic Park came out in 1993.

Shooting Stars with Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer began in 1993

Eastenders was highest rated soap in 1993

X Files debuted in 1993



30 YEARS OF CLIMATEC 1993 - 2023



PHIL BATES DIRECTOR

Hi Phil, when did you meet fellow Director Steve Barker, and how did it come about that you set up Climatec Windows together? I had known Steve for a while, we worked together at a previous company.

When we realised how well we worked together, we decided to move on and set up our own business.

You were working in one 2,000sqft factory unit in the beginning. How many factory and office staff did you start **the business with?** We started our first day with 5 staff in total, Steve and I and three others, manufacturing the REHAU S702 window (now known as the REHAU Tritec 60mm window). I used to do the office work, beading of windows and go out driving. I used to drive a Toyota Hiace and if the products didn't fit it in the van, they would be strapped to the

Can you remember who your first customer was and where they were located? All of our customers at the beginning were local to us. When the business started to grow we employed our first sales rep who then brought in customers from further afield.

Did you have to market the company back in 1993, or were the windows such a sought after product they practically **sold themselves?** No marketing at the beginning. The sales rep brought customers in and it wasn't long before we were quickly known in the industry as suppliers of high quality products.

The growth of the company over the 30 years has been amazing. Did you ever imagine the company would be as big as it is now? The company was first intended to be a lifestyle business and rapid growth wasn't a priority for us. We wanted to set up a small company with a view to making up to 50 frames a week. Every year of the business since then has been a milestone we didn't expect and an achievement in itself that we now have a wide range of products and a group of companies.



JOHN BANKS PRODUCT MANAGER

You've been with the Company since it started up. What was the job you were originally empoyed to do?

My first role back in 1993 was as a fabricator of uPVC doors.

Can you remember how many people were working with you at the beginning? No.. my memory isn't that good anymore! I think during the first year there were about 8 of us on the factory floor.

What did your day's work entail? I spent my day in the factory, fabricating doors primarily, fitting the hardware etc.

How different was the fabrication process back then compared to what it's like now, 30 years later? I would have to say easier! Back then the options were nothing like they are today. A door was a door and not much in the way of specification changes, so although it would have been repetitive work, it made the process easier compared to now where every door off the bench could have varying colours, locks, hinges etc.

You now find yourself as Product Manager with more than just a white REHAU window being manufactured by the Group. What do you think has been the biggest change you've seen over the years, apart from the obvious growth? It has to be the choices homeowners now have. I often say that back then once the homeowners had decided on white, mahogany or golden oak windows (that was all we had), the only other real choice could make was maybe 3 or 4 different colour window handles. Nowadays I think a sales person could spend hours going through all the choices we offer as an industry.

Any funny stories you can tell us about from 30 years ago? I recall losing a ring in a huge bag of swarf once! After doing a clean up on the machines I realised I'd lost my ring. I had to tip this huge bag of swarf out on the floor and rummage through it until it was found.. funny for those around me watching maybe but not for

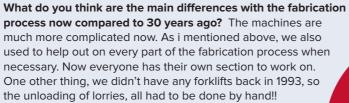
I also recall me and a couple of the lads sitting around during break time with our (huge) mobile phones and being able to do text messages for the first time! Now look at what we can do with

MARTIN NICOLINI PURCHASING MANAGER You have also been with the Company

since the beginning. Can you tell us what job you were employed to do back then? I started the company as a window fabricator.

How many people worked with you in the factory? There was about 8 other people.

What did your day's work entail? My main job was manufacturing windows and gearing up sashes. I did also help out with welding, corner cleaning and deliveries, service calls and unloading of profiles. It was a case of everyone mucking in when needed.



Explain how different this whole sector is different now, compared to 30 years ago? 30 years ago the amount of products we offered were tiny compared to now. The choices available to customers is vast and keeping on top of sourcing these products definitely keeps me busy.

used to help out on every part of the fabrication process when

launched in the UK in The sporty Renault Clio 30 years on, you are now managing the Purchasing team. Williams with a two-litre engine and the Vauxhall Corsa which featured the

CHRIS DERRICK ORDER PROCESSING

You started work with Climatec when you were just 19 years old! What were you employed to do back

I originally started as a glazier when most windows were externally glazed and frames went out with the glass

Can you remember how many people were working with you during those early years of Climatec? I think there were 12-15 of us on the factory floor in 1994. Steve, Phil and Jan were in the office and there was one

What did your day's work entail? Glazing glass into windows or cutting and fitting e-gaskets. I also helped to load deliveries, and also bring in the REHAU profile once it was delivered to us.

Do you think it's much different now to working on the factory floor back then? The whole process was very similar. It's just scaled up now. Most of the hardware has changed but making the windows hasn't.

You are now office based as an Order Processor. What do you think has been the biggest change you've seen over the years, apart from the obvious growth? Quite a few changes over the years for example, the change to internal beading and reverse butt welding was massive. Bringing in the auto saw machining centres have changed the production process for the better and there has been an explosion of colours over the years, as well as colours that were once popular, for example Mahogany, now disappearing off the scene.

Any funny stories from your time back in the early 90's you can tell us? There are plenty I can recall, I just can't say before 9pm. It was just a different time back then. People were smoking in the factory and offices and I do remember someone colouring in the rims of the ear defenders with black marker pen, leaving us all with black rings around our ears! A bit of silicone sealant on drill triggers was funny and we always had Radio 1 on - our favourite was Simon Mayo and his confession slot. Some of those on the show were a bit tame however, compared to the banter we had at work back then!

UPVC PRODUCTION AT CLIMATEC WINDOWS



Climatec's Production Manager, Paul Brooker, has the huge task of managing the uPVC manufacturing facilities here at Climatec Windows. With uPVC production taking up approximately 40,000 sqft of factory space and around 1400 frames made every week, this certainly is no mean feat for Paul.

Working with the company for nearly 24 years, Paul has seen a lot of changes within the business; the growth of the company as well as the product types now available, the investment in machinery for production of the various windows and doors and of course the huge increase in staff. This is currently standing at 81 production staff and growing daily.

Climatec also have a night shift in place to continue the manufacturing into the evening, making sure all goods are QC checked and ready for delivery the next day.

The business started in 1993 making REHAU windows, and these are still very much the leading products manufactured by Climatec now. With the addition of REHAU doors, Vertical Sliders and the recent Rio flush products the portfolio is a lot bigger and add to that the Residence Flush products and the Deceuninck Slider 24 we certainly have a varied choice of windows and doors for our customers.

Paul was just 18 years old when he started with Climatec, joining us as a window and door fabricator, and then becoming team leader, factory foreman and now production manager. Paul says "Growing with the company has been a great experience for me, being involved in many changes and seeing the difference in the quality of products over the years. When I first started we were working in two factory units, we now have five. And the choices of products, colours, door and window furniture is huge compared to when I

first started here. Customers have so much to choose from now." Two new cars were

> The company also had to work through the obstacle that was Covid. Paul says "Covid didn't stop us! It was challenging that's for sure. Thankfully construction was one of the first businesses allowed to start up again during the pandemic so after three and a half weeks into lockdown, we were back fabricating under strict government guidelines. With our customers still ordering windows and doors throughout this covid pandemic, it certainly was interesting trying to manufacture wearing masks and keeping 2m away from our colleagues!"

And what now for Climatec Windows? More of the same but bigger and better. The Climatec Group is still growing, so watch this space.









1993.

latest high-tec spec for

Vauxhall - a tape

player!



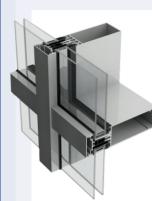




2023 also sees Alu-tec head into their tenth year of manufacturing aluminium doors and windows. The days of two fabricators in a small factory unit are long gone and just looking at the frames per week count at the end of 2022, the growth of Alu-tec over the ten years just shows how popular aluminium products have become.

Now employing 29 factory staff and 7 office staff, the company has expanded year on year. Factory and office space has increased and this year Alu-tec has acquired a further 6,000 sqft of additional factory space to enable further, enhanced product offering.

Alu-tec will also be manufacturing curtain walling this year for commercial products. Curtain walling is a lightweight, non-structural aluminium cladding system, normally specified for the external walls of large multi-storey buildings. This will be made using the AluK SL52 system, a flexible capped solution that is designed to offer high performance as well as providing an impressive look for the outside of the building.



DESIGN FEATURES

- 52mm capped high rise curtain walling system
- Glass loads of up to 400kg
- Can be faceted, curved or angled
- Various drainage methods including mullion and
- Large range of box sizes to optimise small to large spans of glazing
- CWCT Certified
- Fully integrates with all AluK window and door

OPTIONS

- Glazing and infill range from 6mm - 50mm
- Fully integrated vent options including POV, TBT, Top Hung, Side Hung, Fixed Light
- Wide range of face cap options to meet design requirements
- Available in single or dual colour option, polyester powder coating and anodised finishes



Meet the three new staff members who have joined the Alu-tec team alongside Jenna, Brooke and Alec, as well as Phoebe who you met in our last issue of Vista.

Say hello to Connor, Michael and Tom.

Alu-tec Office Team - pictured left to right: Phoebe, Jenna, Michael, Tom, Brooke, Connor and Alec.

TOM MCGREGOR:

Tom is Alu-tec's new

profile, booking in the

deliveries and making

sure everything is as it

Working alongside

Alec Trott, Tom is

should be.

CONNOR JONES:

Connor joins the team in the role of Estimator. A busy role every day with the amount of new build / replacement product

enquiries that Alu-tec receive.

Connor's last job was very different to this one, however having studied construction and the built environment at college has definitely helped in understanding certain aspects of his job.

When he's not working Connor likes to spend time with his friends and family.

MICHAEL CARDY:

Michael also joins the estimating team and as well as providing quotes to our trade customers he will also assist with commercial projects.

Having 20 years experience in the industry; fabricator, factory manager, purchase manager, processor and

estimator, Michael certainly brings a wealth of knowledge to Alu-tec.

Family time is important to Michael and he also enjoys some DIY and a spot of snooker.



Tom also seems to have been given the label 'Tech Goblin' by his fellow colleagues as technology is something he likes to dabble with in his spare time. If one of their computers is playing up, Tom comes to the rescue.





Greg Makowski is the Factory Manager at Alu-tec and has seen a lot of changes over the last ten years. Greg is Polish and has settled in the UK with his family. He has brought Poland's hardworking ethic to Alu-tec and now runs a tight ship in the aluminium factory.

Greg, how long have you worked for The Climatec Group / Alu-tec?

At the end of January, I will have worked for Alu-tec for 10 years. I was one of the first employees and there were only two of us in the factory at the start.

Is this when you moved from Poland to England? Or did you work somewhere else before joining Alu-tec?

I moved to England 11 years ago and worked in another factory, before joining Alu-tec.

As Factory Manager for Alu-tec, what does your current job entail on a day to day basis? I manage the factory staff, the production process and basically oversee the running of the factory.

You've been working for Alu-tec since the beginning with two factory staff, how does that compare to now?

The factory is much bigger, with 29 fabricators and 7 office staff. The small amount of factory space we had back in 2013 has now increased to approx 18,000 sq ft and we now have 10 machines, spare parts storage room and two Alu-tec vehicles. We are developing quickly and dynamically every day.

The covid pandemic saw most of the country grind to a halt, but construction was quickly back up and running. How long after the initial shutdown were your factories back producing aluminium windows and doors?

The government advised that the construction industry would be the first to return to work following the lockdown at the end of March. We opened our factories on this advice and fortunately for us we didn't seem to have any negative impact from the pandemic. We were soon very busy producing products for our commercial customers, and not long after that our retail customers started ordering again.

The growth of Alu-tec has been amazing over these 10 years and we've seen a big rise in the popularity of aluminium windows and doors? What is the most popular product being made at the moment in your factories? Definitely the bi-fold door. This is a very popular product for homeowners and newbuild property contractors. However there's no doubting how great all our products are, windows and doors, and the order books seem to prove that fact.

What is your favourite product to make?

That would have to be anything non-standard, windows or doors. It's always good to get something new and different and see it being made in the factory, for example shaped products.

How many times a year do you manage to get back to Poland?

I try to be in Poland at least two or three times a year to see the family.

Finally, what do you like to do when you finally leave the factory for the day / weekend?

I have two daughters, so I try to spend as much of my free time with them as possible. There really isn't much time to sit around and be bored with these two ha ha.



















LET'S FOCUS ON QUALITY

The Climatec Group's main priority is to provide top class products at the highest quality.

All of our windows and doors go through a quality control procedure to ensure that the fabricated product adheres to a defined set of criteria to meet the high standards required by our customers.

This criteria does not start and end with the product quality however, but also takes into account the

variety of processes that ultimately end with the correct window and door originally ordered. For example, receipt of order through to delivery, the health and safety of the production units, the people and the continued improvement policy.

The quality control procedure is such an involved process, and as such we have now made a position in the business for a Compliance Manager who will support the organisation in reducing errors and improve on the high level of health & safety already within the group. The objective of this role is to pinpoint trends and errors and focus on route cause analysis to target any problem areas and make improvements; ultimately identifying the groups risks and opportunities.

From the start, back in 1993, Climatec pride themselves on delivering quality in all we produce, and as the company grows we understand that this process needs to be managed thoroughly to improve on the overall production procedure.





NEW ALUMINIUM THRESHOLD PRODUCT

We now have a new a slimmer Stormguard aluminium threshold option for open in and open out doors which is more aesthetically pleasing and easier to transport. These new options also do not require the continuous run under side panels.

A spec sheet with full details of both products is available from the Harware section of our information centre at www.climatec-windows.co.uk.



AM3Ex78 Door Threshold Cill **Inward Opening Door**



AM5Ex78 Door Threshold Cill **Outward Opening Door**

PRODUCT WITHDRAWAL

BLACK DOOR PANELS - COLOUR DISCREPANCY

Following a few customer issues with the colour of the panels supplied with our REHAU Schwarzbraun (Black/ Brown) doors, we have taken the decision to withdraw the Black decorative and shiplap Infill panels from our range of door options.

Infill panels are foiled using a different material and process to uPVC profiles and whilst we have encountered very few issues with colour matches, unfortunately Black is an exception, and is impossible to rectify. Therefore, rather than continue to be unable to match customers expectations, we consider withdrawal the only sensible way forward

We will continue to offer 28mm Flat Panels in Black as this particular item has not been subject to the same discrepancies mentioned above.

MIXED COLOUR FOILS

If you missed the recent mailout that was sent, please now be aware that "special" mixed colour or non standard colour foil finishes on windows and doors will now require a 35% deposit of the order value.

These foiled products from our suppliers are not 'off the shelf' profiles and have to be foiled as a small batch run. Unfortunately these are not given priority over bulk production and as a consequence we typically have to wait 8-12+ weeks for a delivery to us. Even then we can experience missing items which result in further delays. In these instances we may not meet the delivery dates originally given to customers and this unfortunately can sour our trading relationship.

Therefore to protect our customers and to eliminate cancellations of jobs that will leave us with unwanted coloured profile, we will apply a deposit on any orders requiring mixed colour or non standard colour foil finishes. Please also note that only when the profile has been received from the supplier will we be able to advise on an approximate delivery date.





