

MRW EDITORIAL

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Inspiration and innovation

Sometimes you meet people who are brimming with so much enthusiasm it really is quite infectious and gives you back your zest for life. Last week I went along to Ecobuild, a trade exhibition for those involved with sustainable design and construction, and met a number of people who had seen an opportunity, had a vision and made it happen.


There was Simon Greer from Nulife Glass, who had spent about 13 years trying to find a method of taking the hazardous lead out of the cathode ray tube (CRT) glass that is found in old television screens and computer monitors. He was told it wasn't possible, but persevered and has now cracked the problem and proved his solution. This means both the lead and the glass can be reused as raw materials and the glass is no longer hazardous. The glass can go into applications as diverse as cufflinks, wall and floor tiles, kitchen worktops and high-grade aggregates.

Working with one of last year's National Recycling Award winners, GLASSeco, Simon has even used some of the glass he had separated out from old TV screens for making his own kitchen worktops.



Donald Crawley, one of GLASSeco's directors, had equally spent about 10 years of his life working out how he could find a better use for glass waste that was ending up in landfill. *MRW* magazine has previously covered the story of how he experimented with mixing waste glass with resin in his garden shed to create worktops. A chance break led to him making a worktop for an eco-house featured in *Grand Designs* and judging by the number of people at his stand at the exhibition, it's a product people are really interested in.


GLASSeco is now working with Chamois, who make kitchens using 100% recycled timber panels, so you can get a truly recycled kitchen.

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And finally there was Les Owens, the managing director of BuilderScrap, a website designed to prevent construction waste from going to landfill. The free service acts like a match-maker for those wanting building materials and those with building materials to get rid of. A builder himself, Les knows how builders think and operate, so has made the website 'builder-friendly' and easy to upload photos and information from site.

It's built around the premise of why you would want to pay to have skips of perfectly usable material thrown away when you could give it to someone who wants it for free. Why indeed. All three were a really good example of thinking outside the box and finding innovative solutions. And they were a real inspiration.

Andrea Height, Deputy Editor, MRW

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