INSIDE: 2026: A YEAR OF BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR UK ALUMINIUM

ALUMINIUM NEWS

THE VOICE OF THE UK ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY

2026 ANNUAL BUSINESS BRIEFING & ANNUAL DINNER BRINGS TOGETHER RECORD NUMBERS TO CHAMPION THE FUTURE OF UK ALUMINIUM

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2026: A YEAR OF BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR UK ALUMINIUM

BY NADINE BLOXSOME, CEO, ALUMINIUM FEDERATION

It's always slightly strange sitting down to write a year in review. When you're in the middle of it, moving from one meeting, member visit or Government conversation to the next, you don't necessarily stop to think about just how much has happened. And 2026 has certainly been busy!

A big focus for us this year has been making sure aluminium has a much stronger voice in the conversations taking place around the future of UK industry. We know how important our sector is. The challenge is making sure Government, policymakers and the wider manufacturing community understand that too.

Our House of Lords event was an important part of that, bringing members and policymakers together for some proper discussion about the challenges and opportunities facing UK aluminium, alongside the launch of our Positions & Strategic Priorities Framework. Rather than simply talking at Government, we've continued to create opportunities for members to be part of those conversations directly.

And we've seen some tangible results.

Our work alongside the Cast Metals Federation contributed to the expansion of eligibility under the British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme (BICS), helping bring important parts of the aluminium and cast metals sectors within scope. With energy costs remaining one of the biggest competitiveness issues facing UK manufacturers, this was a really important outcome.

We've also pushed hard this year to raise aluminium's profile as a strategic material. Our work around defence, critical minerals, industrial strategy, circularity and scrap has all been part of the same bigger picture: aluminium is fundamental to the industries Britain wants to grow.

That means moving the conversation beyond aluminium simply being a material we use, to understanding the industrial capability that sits behind it – and what the UK needs to retain, rebuild and invest in.

Our UK Aluminium Industry Map, developed through the UK Aluminium Alliance, has helped us tell that story visually. It shows just how connected and geographically diverse our industry is, and where capability exists across the country. If you haven't looked at it recently, please do – and make sure your company details are up to date!

Getting policymakers out of Westminster and into member businesses has been equally important. Visits such as our trip with the Department for Business and Trade to Swan Alloy give officials the opportunity to hear directly from industry and see first-hand the realities of running an aluminium business in the UK. I'd like to do much more of this.

Of course, advocacy is only one part of what ALFED does.





Trade and regulation have kept us particularly busy this year. Through our work on customs, CBAM and international trade, alongside webinars, podcasts and our Trade & Customs Whitepaper with the Chartered Institute of Export & International Trade, we've tried to turn some fairly complicated issues into practical information members can actually use.

We've continued investing in skills and knowledge too, from Aluminium Light and bespoke training through to our Rising Star Apprentice Award and wider work to recognise the next generation coming into our industry. Seeing this year's Rising Star finalists together at Hydro's Tibshelf site was a great reminder that there is some fantastic talent coming through.

One of my personal highlights was our first ALFED Members' Day. We wanted something a little different: useful industry insight and opportunities to make connections, but in a relaxed environment where people could actually spend time talking to each other. Judging by the conversations – and the competitiveness around the dartboard – I think we achieved that!

Our LME Ring Tours have also continued to be incredibly popular, giving members a behind-the-scenes look at one of the institutions at the heart of the global metals industry.

And throughout all of this, we've kept celebrating what our members are doing – new investment, innovation, sustainability, site visits, member spotlights and the people behind the businesses.

As we head towards 2027, though, I think the conversation is moving on again.

Government is talking increasingly about reindustrialisation, resilience and rebuilding British manufacturing. For ALFED, that creates a real opportunity. We need to understand what aluminium capability we still have, what we've lost, where the gaps are and what we can realistically rebuild.

That will be a major focus for us in the year ahead.

But for now, a huge thank you to our members, Board, Sector Groups, Committees and the ALFED team for everything you've contributed during 2026. There is plenty still to do, but I think we're going into 2027 with a stronger voice, a clearer story and some real momentum behind UK aluminium.









2026 ALFED BUSINESS BRIEFING & ANNUAL DINNER BRINGS TOGETHER RECORD NUMBERS TO CHAMPION THE FUTURE OF UK ALUMINIUM

Record attendance, industry insight, award celebrations and inspiring stories define ALFED's biggest flagship event to date

The Aluminium Federation (ALFED) welcomed a record number of delegates, members, industry partners and guests to its 2026 Business Briefing & Annual Dinner, held on Thursday 24th September at the Crowne Plaza in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Bringing together more than 150 delegates during the day and over 250 guests for the evening Annual Dinner, the event marked the largest gathering in the Federation's history, reinforcing its focus on collaboration, innovation and strategic discussion across the UK aluminium industry.

Kindly sponsored by DTE, RamBase, Aluminium International Today, CarbonChain, Instro and Envantage, the Business Briefing delivered a comprehensive programme focused on resilience, competitiveness, sustainability, innovation, skills and future growth.





Industry Leaders Unite to Address Sector Challenges and Opportunities

Opening the Business Briefing, ALFED CEO Nadine Bloxsome welcomed delegates to give a snapshot of the UK aluminium industry to date, and highlighted the importance of partnership and collective action as manufacturers continue to navigate economic uncertainty, global competition, regulatory change and the transition to a low-carbon future.

The morning keynote from John Pearce, Chief Executive of Made in Britain, focused on strengthening the position of UK manufacturing on the global stage. His presentation highlighted the value of promoting British-made products, enhancing national industrial capability and creating sustainable growth opportunities through a stronger manufacturing identity.

Tom Andrews, Engineering Capability Lead, Materials Science at the NCC, provided an insightful overview of the UK's advanced materials landscape, exploring current market trends, emerging technologies and future demand across key manufacturing sectors. His presentation examined the increasingly strategic role that advanced materials will play in driving industrial growth, strengthening manufacturing resilience and supporting the delivery of the UK's wider industrial strategy.

Delegates also heard from Tony Graham, Chairman of OCEA UK Ltd, who examined the importance of strengthening domestic manufacturing capability to support national resilience, defence requirements and economic security. His presentation highlighted the need to maintain critical industrial capacity within the UK and reduce reliance on overseas supply chains.

Providing an economic perspective, Glynn Jones from the Bank of England shared an update on the UK's economic outlook, discussing inflationary pressures, business confidence, investment trends and the wider economic factors influencing manufacturers and supply chains.

Navigating Global Change

One of the day's standout sessions saw a panel of industry experts including Paul Williams (CRU), Emma Swann (BOAL Extrusion UK), Christian Mildner (LME), Anna Doherty (Chartered Institute of Export & International Trade), and Roheet Shah (CarbonChain), led by ALFED CEO Nadine Bloxsome to discuss how businesses can respond to an increasingly volatile global environment.

The discussion explored major industry issues, including trade and geopolitical uncertainty, carbon regulation, supply chain resilience and the UK's industrial competitiveness. Panellists examined both the challenges and opportunities facing the aluminium sector, with topics such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), international trade dynamics and future investment requirements generating significant discussion among delegates.

Innovation, Technology and Sustainability at the Forefront

Innovation remained a central theme throughout the day.

Dr Sohail Nazari of DTE explored how advanced technologies can improve aluminium recycling processes, helping organisations reduce operational uncertainty, enhance efficiency and maximise material recovery rates.

Andrew Hughlock of RamBase, alongside Liv Brevik of Norsk Hydro, demonstrated how digitalisation and quality management systems can unlock greater operational excellence, improve traceability and support long-term competitiveness across global manufacturing organisations.

A technical highlight of the programme came from Professor Mark White of Alumobility, whose presentation focused on addressing vehicle weight growth through the increased use of aluminium. Demonstrating the material's potential to deliver lighter, more efficient and lower-carbon vehicles, he outlined the critical role aluminium will continue to play in future mobility solutions.

Investing in People and Future Talent

Alongside discussions on markets and technology, the afternoon programme placed a strong emphasis on developing people and future leadership.



Representatives from The Outward Bound Trust shared how experiential learning programmes can help organisations build resilience, strengthen teamwork and develop leadership capability across their workforce.

Leadership specialist Sally Twisleton of Assemble Coaching examined the role mentoring can play in supporting career progression, organisational performance and future leadership development.

These themes continued during a dedicated panel discussion including George Bain (George Bain Consulting), Euan Carlile (Department for Work & Pensions), Sally Twisleton (Assemble Coaching), and Yongzhi Luo (Primetals Technologies and 2025 ALFED Rising Star Apprentice Award Winner), led by ALFED Industry & Skills Development Manager Rachel Wiffen, to focus on attracting, developing and retaining talent within manufacturing. Industry experts discussed apprenticeships, skills development, mentoring and engagement initiatives designed to inspire the next generation of manufacturing professionals.

Seas the Day - An Inspiring Message

During the evening dinner, guests were inspired by an extraordinary presentation from Jess Rowe and Miriam Payne of the Seas the Day Rowing Team, who shared the story of their remarkable 8,213-mile Pacific Ocean crossing from Peru to Australia in support of The Outward Bound Trust.

Their incredible journey provided a powerful message about resilience, teamwork, determination and overcoming adversity, perfectly reflecting many of the qualities that continue to drive success across the aluminium industry.



Celebrating Excellence Across the Aluminium Industry

The celebrations continued into the evening as guests gathered for the Annual Dinner and the official launch of the 2026 ALFED Awards.

The awards recognised outstanding achievements from across the UK aluminium supply chain and celebrated the individuals and organisations driving innovation, sustainability and industry excellence.

EDMO Limited Crafts Sustainable Trophies for the 2026 ALFED Awards

The 2026 ALFED Awards were further enhanced by the outstanding trophies created by EDMO Limited, led by Stephen Bradley and the team.
Designed and manufactured specifically for this year's awards, each trophy reflects the values at the heart of the aluminium industry: innovation, craftsmanship and sustainability. Produced from recycled aluminium repurposed from material otherwise destined for scrap, the trophies demonstrate how circularity can be embedded into every stage of manufacturing. Through a combination of precision cutting, machining, surface finishing and laser etching, Edmo transformed a simple aluminium tube into a distinctive award worthy of celebrating excellence across the sector. ALFED extends its sincere thanks to Steve and the entire EDMO team for their creativity, expertise and generous support in helping make the 2026 Awards a truly memorable occasion.

2026 ALFED Award Winners

🏆 **Low-Carbon Innovation Award**
Hydro Building Systems Ltd (TECHNAL by Hydro)

🏆 **Industry Champion Award**
Kirsty Davies-Chinnock, Professional Polishing Services

🏆 **Rising Star Apprentice Award**
Amy Reynolds, BOAL Extrusion UK

A particularly heartfelt moment during the evening was the introduction of the **Industry Champion Award**, established in honour of the **late ALFED Past President, Mark Allen.** Created to recognise individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the aluminium industry, the award will serve as a lasting legacy to Mark's dedication, leadership and commitment to supporting the sector throughout his career.





Looking Ahead

Reflecting on the success of the event, ALFED CEO, Nadine Bloxsome said:

"*The record attendance at this year's Business Briefing and Annual Dinner demonstrates the strength, resilience and ambition of the UK aluminium sector. The discussions throughout the day highlighted both the challenges facing our industry and the significant opportunities ahead. Most importantly, the event showcased the expertise, innovation and collaboration that continue to position aluminium as a critical material in the UK's manufacturing future.*"

With record attendance, high-quality industry debate, inspiring speakers and well-deserved recognition for outstanding achievements, the 2026 ALFED Business Briefing & Annual Dinner reaffirmed the strength of the UK's aluminium community and its determination to drive sustainable growth in the years ahead.

PILGRIM STREET

THE STORY BEHIND A NEWCASTLE LANDMARK

How Architectural Powder Coatings helped deliver one of Newcastle's most recognisable modern buildings and create a lasting landmark for the North East!

35,000+
ALUMINIUM COMPONENTS

4,500
HMRC EMPLOYEES

2-YEAR
DELIVERY PROGRAMME

ONE LANDMARK BUILDING. ONE EXTRAORDINARY COLLABORATION.

The HMRC Headquarters at Pilgrim Street has rapidly become one of Newcastle's most recognisable contemporary buildings and a centrepiece of the wider Pilgrim Quarter regeneration scheme. Accommodating approximately 4,500 HMRC employees, the development combines ambitious design, sustainability and technical innovation, while demonstrating what can be achieved through collaboration across the aluminium supply chain.

Yet behind the building's distinctive Pilgrim Gold façade lies a story of technical expertise, craftsmanship and collaboration that deserves equal recognition.

For Architectural Powder Coatings Ltd (APC), the Blaydon-based architectural powder coating specialist and ALFED member, the project represented one of the most significant developments in the company's history. Responsible for powder coating more than 35,000 aluminium components across a programme spanning almost two years, APC played a central role in delivering the façade that has become one of the defining features of Newcastle's evolving skyline.

While the completed building presents a seamless architectural statement, achieving that result required exceptional planning, technical expertise and close collaboration between multiple organisations. For APC, however, the project carried an additional layer of significance.

A Landmark Building Close to Home

The HMRC Headquarters occupies a prominent position within Newcastle city centre and forms a key part of the wider Pilgrim Quarter regeneration scheme. For a company based just a few miles away in Blaydon, contributing to such a visible and important development created a strong sense of pride.

Craig Johnson, Director at Architectural Powder Coatings Ltd, explained:

> *"We're incredibly proud to have been involved in such a high-profile project, and particularly because of the location. The building is right in the heart of the city we were both born and raised in, so there is a real personal connection to the project for us.*
>
> *To see a building of this scale and prominence become part of the city skyline, knowing that APC has played a significant role in its appearance and long-term performance, is hugely rewarding."*

Being entrusted with a project of this profile, scale and complexity was something APC did not take for granted. The development represented both a significant responsibility and an opportunity to demonstrate the company's capabilities in large-scale architectural powder coating.

That sense of local pride runs throughout the project. While many successful construction projects are ultimately defined by technical specifications and programme delivery, landmark developments become something more. They become part of the places where people live and work.

For APC, Pilgrim Street represents both a significant commercial achievement and a lasting contribution to the city itself.

Delivering Consistency at Scale

One of the most remarkable aspects of the project is its sheer scale.

Over a two-year period, APC powder coated more than 35,000 aluminium components, each of which would ultimately contribute to a single continuous façade. Maintaining appearance, colour consistency and finish quality across such a large volume of material required exceptional process control and attention to detail.

Craig Johnson explained:

> *"The sheer scale of the project was undoubtedly one of the biggest challenges. Coating more than 35,000 individual aluminium components over a two-year programme requires an enormous amount of planning, organisation and attention to detail.*
>
> *With such a large number of components, there are inevitably different profiles, sizes, batches and production requirements to consider. We had to ensure that everything was correctly identified, processed and tracked, while maintaining the required turnaround times and working closely with the wider project team."*

The challenge extended beyond production volume. Once assembled, thousands of individual components would form a single architectural feature visible across multiple elevations.

As Craig noted, consistency was particularly important because even relatively small variations in colour, finish or application could become noticeable once thousands of individual components were installed together. APC's experience, established processes and regular communication with project partners enabled the company to maintain consistency from the first component through to the last.

Quality Without Compromise

For APC, quality control was not simply another stage within the production process. It was fundamental to the integrity of the finished building.

Throughout the programme, rigorous inspection procedures were used to monitor coating thickness, appearance, colour consistency and overall finish quality. Checks were carried out throughout production rather than relying solely on final inspection, ensuring any issues could be identified and addressed early.



Powder-coated aluminium components produced by APC. More than 35,000 components were coated and quality controlled during the programme.

As Gary Dent, Director at APC, explained:

> "*Quality control was absolutely fundamental to the project. When all components ultimately need to work together as part of a single façade, consistency cannot be left to chance.*"

APC's established procedures covered the preparation, coating and inspection of components, helping maintain consistency across multiple production batches throughout the two-year programme. Particular attention was paid to coating thickness, appearance, colour consistency and overall finish quality.

The experience of APC's team also proved invaluable.

> "*Our team's experience was also extremely important. Powder coating at this scale requires people who understand the process and can recognise when something isn't quite right.*
>
> *Ultimately, quality control was about protecting the integrity of the finished façade. Every component had a part to play, so every component needed to be right.*"

The completed building stands as evidence of that commitment to quality and consistency.

Collaboration Across the Supply Chain

As impressive as the finished building appears, no single organisation could have delivered the project independently.

APC worked alongside Schüco International, Axalta Powder Coatings, Dane Architectural Systems and numerous other project partners, each bringing specialist expertise to the development.

Sustainability was also a key consideration throughout the project.

Jonathan Clayton of Schüco UK & Ireland explained:

> "*After our initial meetings with the architect, it became apparent that there was a strong desire for the scheme to be delivered using a low-carbon approach. Through Schüco Carbon Control, we demonstrated how we could meet this very demanding and vital aspect of the project. This was then followed up with the fabricator and the production of certified, project-specific Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for the scheme.*"

For APC, collaboration proved essential throughout the programme.

> "*A project of this scale and complexity is never achieved by one company working in isolation. It requires every organisation involved to understand their role and, importantly, to communicate effectively with everyone else.*"

Gary Dent highlighted the importance of maintaining open dialogue between APC, Dane Architectural Systems, Axalta and Schüco throughout the two-year programme. Clear communication ensured technical queries, production requirements and emerging challenges could be addressed efficiently as the project progressed.

> "*Ultimately, everyone had the same objective: to deliver a high-quality finished building. That shared focus, combined with the expertise of the individual companies involved, was a major factor in the project's success.*"

CREATING PILGRIM GOLD

Perhaps the most striking visual element of the development is its bespoke metallic finish, known as Pilgrim Gold.

Selected to complement the surrounding cityscape while providing the building with a distinctive identity, the finish creates depth and visual interest that changes throughout the day as natural light moves across the façade.

Craig Johnson explained:

"*The choice of colour was ultimately a client and design decision, rather than something APC was responsible for selecting. A number of options were considered during the development of the project, with Axalta's bespoke Pilgrim Gold finish ultimately being selected.*

From our perspective, the finish offered a strong combination of visual appeal and practical performance."

Beyond its visual impact, the finish presented a significant technical challenge. Consistency and repeatability were essential throughout production to ensure the same appearance could be achieved across the entire façade package.

Delivering a metallic finish consistently across more than 35,000 components made APC's long-standing relationship with Axalta Powder Coatings particularly important.

Phillip Fisk of Axalta Powder Coatings explained:

> "*Axalta has always enjoyed a strong relationship with Architectural Powder Coatings and Dane Architectural, built on achieving reliable service levels and providing confidence through quality, especially on complex metallic products.*
>
> *The Pilgrim Gold metallic powder coating oozes quality, especially when sunlight causes it to glow, so it was vital that colour and metallic consistency was maintained across all façades.*"

The result is a façade that has quickly become one of the most recognisable features of Newcastle's modern skyline.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- **NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE**
- **HMRC HEADQUARTERS**
- **4,500 EMPLOYEES**
- **POWDER COATER: ARCHITECTURAL POWDER COATINGS LTD**
- **POWDER SUPPLIER: AXALTA POWDER COATINGS**
- **SYSTEM SUPPLIER: SCHÜCO UK & IRELAND**
- **PRINCIPAL FABRICATOR: DANE ARCHITECTURAL SYSTEMS**
- **MAIN CONTRACTOR: BOWMER + KIRKLAND**
- **ARCHITECT: RYDER ARCHITECTURE**
- **35,000+ COMPONENTS CREATED**



A Lasting Legacy

Today, the HMRC Headquarters stands as a flagship development within Newcastle city centre and an important part of the city's continuing regeneration.

For APC, the completed building represents far more than a successful contract. It demonstrates the company's ability to deliver complex architectural powder coating projects on a significant scale while maintaining the quality and consistency demanded by high-profile developments.

As Craig Johnson explains:

"*For us, the project demonstrates that APC has the experience, infrastructure and technical expertise to deliver powder coating on a genuinely large architectural scale, while still maintaining the level of attention to detail and quality that you would expect on a much smaller project.*"

The project also highlights the depth of expertise that exists across the UK's architectural powder coating sector.

"*Powder coating can sometimes be viewed as a relatively straightforward finishing process, but projects such as this demonstrate how much technical knowledge, specialist equipment, quality control and experience sit behind achieving a successful architectural finish.*"

Looking back, Craig Johnson believes the greatest reward comes from seeing the finished building and recognising the contribution APC made to creating it.

"*There is a real sense of pride within the whole APC team. This wasn't simply about coating aluminium components and sending them back out; we were contributing to a landmark building that will be part of the city for many years to come.*

During a project of this size, you can become very focused on individual batches, components and production schedules, so it is quite different when you finally step back and see all of those individual elements come together as one completed building.

It is a project that our team can look at and say, 'We helped create that.'"

That sense of pride is perhaps the most fitting legacy of all. Behind every landmark building are the people and organisations whose expertise makes it possible. In the case of Pilgrim Street, Architectural Powder Coatings Ltd can rightly claim to have played a defining role in bringing one of Newcastle's newest landmarks to life.

As the building continues to serve thousands of HMRC employees every day, it also stands as a visible reminder of the expertise, quality and craftsmanship that exist throughout the UK's aluminium supply chain.

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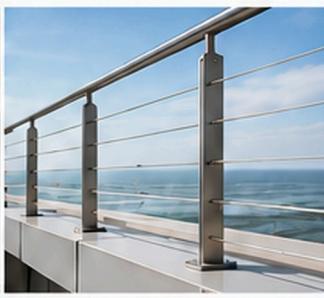
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FAST LAPS, BIG IDEAS & BRILLIANT INSIGHTS: ALFED ATTEND SMITHS METAL CENTRES' INNOVATION DAY

On Thursday 25th June 2026, the Aluminium Federation (ALFED) team were thrilled to attend Smiths Metal Centres' highly engaging Innovation Day, taking place across their HQ in Biggleswade and the Red Bull Technology Campus in Milton Keynes, where innovation, collaboration and industry expertise were showcased at every stage.

The day began with a unique and interactive experience, as attendees put their driving skills to the test on Silverstone Formula 1 simulators. The session sparked some friendly competition within the ALFED team, with CEO Nadine Bloxsome securing an impressive second-place podium, closely followed by Marketing Executive Emily Foster, who recorded the second-fastest lap time within the group at 45 seconds.

Following the simulator session, the team was given a comprehensive tour of Smiths Metal Centres' Biggleswade headquarters. The visit provided valuable insight into the organisation's extensive metals stockholding and distribution capabilities. The warehouse tour concluded with a lively and competitive mini golf challenge, where Nadine Bloxsome once again claimed victory among the ALFED team.

The itinerary continued with a visit to Smiths' UKAS-accredited testing laboratory, where attendees were introduced to the technical capabilities behind tensile testing and Charpy impact testing. A highlight of this session was the "Charpy Champagne Challenge," during which participants tested their speed and precision, with several ALFED representatives achieving times under four seconds.

Further insight was provided through a quality-focused presentation delivered by Mike Barfoot, who demonstrated how Smiths' Golden Eye platform supports the delivery of materials that meet client specifications 'right first time', reinforcing the company's commitment to excellence.



Following a hog roast lunch, the group travelled to Milton Keynes for an exclusive tour of the Red Bull Racing Technology Campus. The visit offered a behind-the-scenes look at the fast-paced and highly precise environment that underpins the preparation for Formula 1 race days, highlighting the critical role of engineering innovation in elite motorsport.

The day concluded with a well-organised evening dinner, during which winners of the F1 simulator and Charpy Champagne Challenge were recognised. Guests also heard speeches from Smiths' Mark Dyer and Andy Hayhurst, alongside representatives from Red Bull, providing further insight into innovation within the sector.

Speaking on the day, Smith's Mike Barfoot commented: *"Smiths innovation day was created to showcase our commitment and passion towards supply chain innovation. We are so proud of the work we do and the high standards we achieve so getting to share that first hand with our customers is incredibly rewarding. The innovation day demonstrates how we can develop partnerships with customers and how they can trust our processes to get it right first time".*

Barfoot added: *"It takes an incredible amount of hard work and dedication to make days like this happen, but it is so satisfying when you see how much everyone enjoys the day and the pride with which every colleague goes about their work. Today I'm proud that I get to work with such excellent and dedicated people."*

Reflecting on the experience, ALFED expressed our appreciation to Smiths Metal Centres for delivering a truly memorable and inspiring event. It was truly refreshing to witness first-hand Smith's strong workplace culture, which is evident through its long-standing workforce and continued forward-thinking approach.

To learn more about Smith's, please visit: www.smithmetal.com



WHAT THE EU HAS TAUGHT UK ALUMINIUM

BY NICK OGILVIE, PRODUCT MANAGER & CBAM LEAD, CARBONCHAIN



Since 1 January 2026, EU importers of aluminium have been accruing a carbon liability under the EU CBAM, after more than two years of reporting-only rehearsal. The UK CBAM starts on 1 January 2027 with no rehearsal: liability runs from day one. Many ALFED members import into the UK and sell into the EU, so both regimes reach them. The EU's experience so far offers four lessons.

1. Supplier data is a relationship, not a request

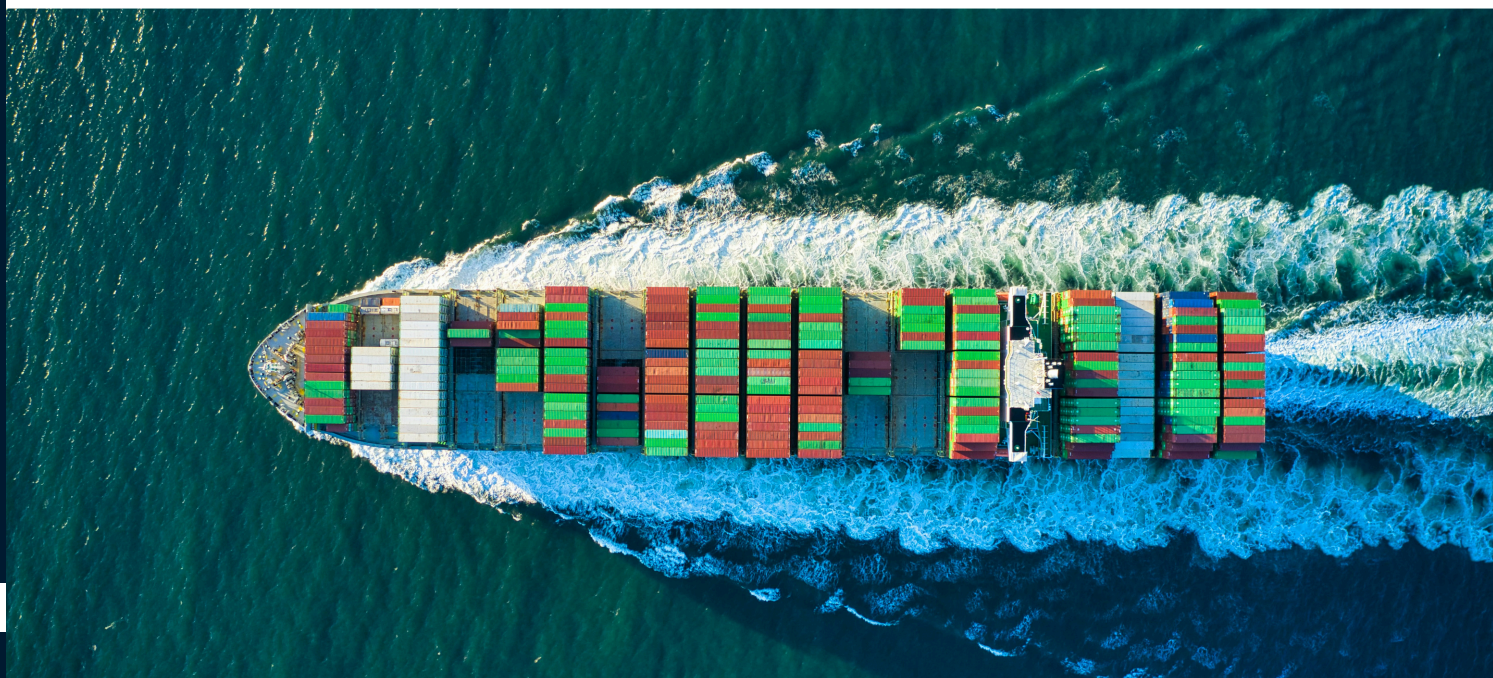
The EU made importers legally responsible for emissions data that only producers can generate. As we wrote earlier this year, that has strained relationships on both sides: importers chasing suppliers through spreadsheets and PDFs, producers answering the same question in a different format for every customer. Aluminium feels this acutely: metal often reaches a UK extruder or stockholder through traders and distributors, several steps from the smelter or remelter that holds the numbers. The businesses that coped best started early, wrote data obligations into contracts, and treated installation data as something prepared once and shared many times. UK rules are closely aligned with the EU's but not identical, so that data needs checking before it is reused.

2. Default values are a price, not a fallback

EU defaults are country-specific and deliberately punitive, with mark-ups rising from 10% in 2026 to 30% from 2028. The UK's 2027 defaults are due this autumn, and their design is a particular risk for aluminium. The Treasury has said values will be trade-weighted, will look to exclude data from jurisdictions with robust monitoring regimes such as the EU, and may carry mark-ups. Any European metal declared on defaults would then be priced on other origins' data, and one value per commodity code would not distinguish primary metal from recycled. Worse, a UK return filed on defaults cannot later be amended to substitute verified data (Finance Act 2026, Schedule 17, paragraph 8(2)).

3. Carbon is now part of the price

Carbon has moved quickly from compliance into commercial terms. In steel, some buyers of high-default origins have turned vessels around, cancelled contracts and diverted cargoes, as we reported for Trade Finance Global. In aluminium, two lots of identical specification can now carry very different costs depending on origin and evidence. UK exporters already feel this: UK-origin metal remains fully inside the EU CBAM, and the quality of a supplier's data increasingly influences who wins EU business. From January, the same logic arrives in UK procurement.



4. Don't plan to the opening bill

In both regimes the charge is built to rise. The UK's 2027 aluminium rate is likely to be low because it is discounted for UK producers' free allowances, but that discount shrinks every year as free allocation is phased out. Indirect emissions, the largest source for most primary metal, are out of UK scope until 2029 at the earliest, and adding them could multiply the charge. A UK–EU ETS link, expected to bring mutual CBAM exemptions, is still under negotiation. Even then, UK exemption would follow origin, so third-country metal cleared into the EU before reaching the UK could still be charged under both regimes, with no confirmation yet that EU CBAM paid counts towards UK relief.

What to do before 1 January 2027

Verified supplier data takes months to line up. Check your exposure against the £50,000 threshold, which runs on a rolling 12 months and, once crossed, captures all your CBAM goods. Ask suppliers now for installation-level data and verification plans, and write those obligations into 2027 contracts. Model defaults against actuals as soon as the Treasury publishes its values. First-year importers must register by 31 January 2028, then file and pay by 31 May 2028.

If you'd like help, CarbonChain can help you collect, prepare and report your carbon data. Speak to an expert today.



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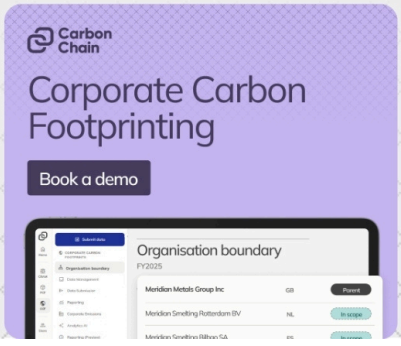
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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST IN NORWAY

BY RICHARD BESANT, DIRECTOR, POWDERTECH (CORBY)

On a trip to Norway, I spotted, on the same day, two perfect examples of the good and the bad, beauty and the beast, in the use of aluminium and powder coating in construction. Let's start with the good; something to celebrate!

I love how this building (*shown right*) takes something as everyday as a corrugated aluminium façade and gives it a clever twist, literally. What could have been a flat, forgettable frontage now makes you stop and think... 'Wait! What's happening here?!'



The gentle folds turn a purely functional surface into a bold design move, creating built-in entrance canopies that grab your attention. It looks more like a piece of fabric than a sheet of metal.

It's a perfect example of how a small shift in thinking can transform the ordinary into the unforgettable. Simple, striking, and seriously smart. It also demonstrates the immense versatility of aluminium as a construction material.

Oh dear, and now for the bad (*below*). This, seen a few moments later on the same stroll around Haugesund, is an example of a failure to recognise the critical importance of pre-treatment for powder coating.



The powder-coated louvre comprises an extruded horizontal aluminium batten with a pressed metal end cap.

The batten shows no signs of coating failure, even at the cut ends. Why? Because it was fully pre-treated and professionally coated before installation. No moisture ingress, no corrosion, just long-term protection.

The end cap however, tells a different story, with blistering, corrosion, and coating failure. It seems to have been added as an afterthought, likely trimmed on site and not properly pretreated before coating. This has resulted in a coating failure that ruins the finish and the entire appearance of the facade.

Pre-treatment of the metal is the single most important stage in powder coating. It is critical to ensure consistent pre-treatment across every component, no matter how small, or late in the project. Pre-treatment and coating specifications must apply to every part, not just the main components. Last-minute decisions and inadequate pre-treatment presage disasters waiting to happen can completely compromise the durability and appearance of your work.

Get in touch if you'd like support specifying a consistent pre-treatment and powder coating system for your next architectural or bespoke metalwork project. We're happy to help you achieve 'the beauty' and not 'the beast'.



WHEN TIGHT TOLERANCES MATTER

In precision engineering, dimensional accuracy, material consistency and dependable performance are essential. Standard extruded aluminium tube may provide a suitable starting point, but some applications require tighter tolerances, more consistent dimensions or specific mechanical properties.

Precision cold drawing provides the additional control needed to meet these requirements.

What does precision drawing achieve?

During cold drawing, aluminium tube is pulled through carefully controlled tooling to reduce and refine its dimensions. Depending on the required specification, the process can control characteristics such as the outside and inside diameter, wall thickness, concentricity, mechanical properties, and final temper.

The tube may pass through several stages of drawing and heat treatment before reaching its finished specification. Each drawing pass work-hardens the material, while intermediate heat treatments can restore ductility and allow further dimensional reduction.

By controlling this sequence, Spartal can produce tube with the combination of dimensions, strength, hardness and temper required for its intended use.

More than a standard tube size

One of the main benefits of precision drawing is the ability to engineer aluminium tube around the needs of the finished component.

This can reduce the need for extensive secondary machining and help improve fit, assembly and repeatability across production batches. It can also give design engineers greater flexibility when standard extruded sizes or properties do not meet the application's requirements.

Precision drawing can be applied to both seamless and porthole-extruded aluminium tube. Seamless tube may be appropriate for particular applications, but it is the required process, required tolerance and end-use performance that should determine the manufacturing route.



Selecting the correct starting material, alloy, temper and drawing process allows engineers to balance performance, manufacturability and cost rather than defaulting to a single tube type.

Supporting demanding applications

Precision drawn aluminium tube is used across applications where consistency and performance are critical.

In defence equipment, it can provide controlled dimensions and mechanical properties for lightweight structures, telescopic components and specialist assemblies.

Within medical equipment, accurate outside and inside diameters can support the reliable fit and movement of components in adjustable products, mobility equipment and precision mechanisms.

Electronics, products and sports equipment can also benefit from lightweight aluminium tube that combines dimensional accuracy with a high-quality surface finish.

Reducing weight without compromising performance

Aluminium's favourable strength-to-weight ratio makes it valuable where reducing component weight is a design priority. However, effective lightweighting is not simply a matter of selecting a thinner wall.

Engineers must consider tube diameter, wall thickness, alloy, temper, loading, fatigue, buckling and the way the component will be joined or assembled. Precision drawing provides greater control over these variables, helping to reduce unnecessary material while maintaining the performance required from the finished component.

Precision drawn aluminium tube from Spartal

Spartal manufactures precision drawn aluminium tube in the UK for a wide range of specialist sectors and markets.

Its capabilities include seamless and porthole drawn tube, close dimensional tolerances, specialist tempers including T832, and tube manufactured to meet specific customer requirements.

By working with designers, engineers and purchasing teams from an early stage, Spartal can help identify the most appropriate alloy, temper, dimensions and manufacturing route for each application.

Manufactured in the UK. Delivered worldwide.

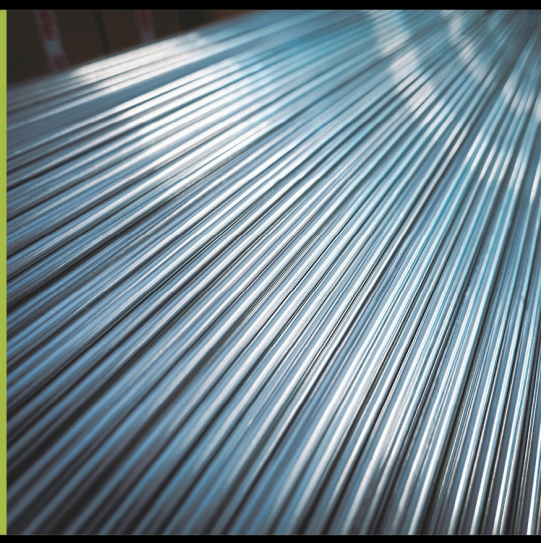
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Contact your local Service Centre for further information **www.rightonblackburns.co.uk**





PHOTO: HYDRO

LESSONS FROM NORSK HYDRO

VARIATION IS EXPENSIVE

What nearly 20 years with Hydro has taught us about the cost of poor quality

What can metals businesses learn from one of the world's leading aluminium and renewable energy companies about reducing variation, defects and the cost of poor quality?
Quite a lot, we think!



By Andrew Hughlock
RamBase Quality Management
rambase.com/qms

RamBase has worked with Norsk Hydro for nearly 20 years, giving us a rare view of how a global metals business manages quality. One thing stands out: quality isn't separate from operations. It's part of how work gets done. With energy, labour and raw material costs squeezing margins, that approach is worth exploring.

START WITH STANDARD WORK

Variation is one of manufacturing's biggest challenges. Sites develop their own ways of working, knowledge sits with experienced individuals and local documents multiply. Before long, teams doing essentially the same job are doing it very differently.

Hydro has put considerable focus on standardisation. Within its Global Business Services operation, around 980 SOPs were consolidated into a single global standard. The principle is simple: establish reliable ways of working, make them easy to access and keep improving them.

Across Hydro, RamBase Quality Management (QMS) supports more than 62,000 controlled documents and over 318,000 recorded read-and-understood activities. A work instruction isn't much use if an operator can't find it, doesn't know it has changed or is working from an old revision. Video and imagery can be embedded in SOPs to show how tasks are done to overcome communication barriers.

UPDATED ISN'T UNDERSTOOD

When something changes, the question shouldn't just be, "Have we updated the document?" It should also be, "Have the people affected understood the change, and are they competent to carry it out?" Connecting document control, Read & Accept, training and competence closes that gap.

When something goes wrong, a deviation or NCR should create learning, not just another record.

Imagine an operator identifies a recurring deviation. The cause is investigated, corrective action is assigned and the work instruction is revised. Employees are notified, retrained and their competence tracked.

A supervisor then returns to the shop floor for Job Observations (supervised Gemba Walks) with operatives to check the improved process is being followed.

SPOT IT. UNDERSTAND IT. FIX IT. TRAIN IT. CHECK IT.

That creates a continuous feedback loop, with audit traceability showing what changed, why and what happened next. Compare that with NCRs in one system, instructions in another, competence in a spreadsheet and observations on paper.

THE COST OF POOR QUALITY

Variation is expensive: scrap, rework, downgraded material, repeat defects, production delays, customer complaints, and experienced people firefighting the same issues. For businesses on tight margins, small improvements become significant when repeated across thousands of tonnes.

Quality isn't just about passing audits; it's about operational control. RamBase QMS brings documents, training, competence, NCRs, CAPA and Job Observations together in one cloud platform.

Not every metals business operates at Hydro's scale, but the principles travel. Standardise. Make knowledge accessible. Build competence. Learn from deviations. Check what's happening on the shop floor. Then improve again. That's how quality reduces cost, protects margins and creates competitive advantage.

Quality and Operations leaders in primary metals, metal processing and recycling are invited to meet the RamBase team at UK Metals Expo, 4–5 November 2026, Stand D81.

rambase.com/qms

Andrew Hughlock (andrew.hughlock@hatteland.com) advises customers on quality management at RamBase QMS. Their cloud QMS is used by Norsk Hydro and other metals producers and processors, large and small.

RAMBASE

CLOSED-LOOP ALUMINIUM:

CONSTRUCTION'S NEXT CARBON OPPORTUNITY

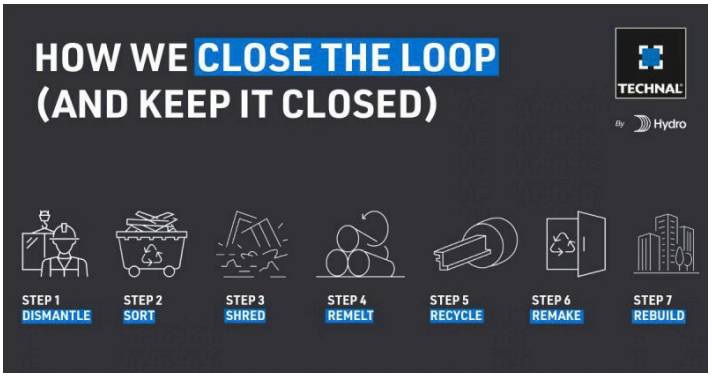
TECHNAL® By Hydro

The next major reduction in construction carbon will not come from new materials. It will come from using existing materials more intelligently. For aluminium, one of the industry's most valuable resources, that means moving beyond recycling and embracing closed-loop circularity.

Aluminium is one of the few construction materials that can be recycled repeatedly without any loss of performance. Yet significant volumes of end-of-life aluminium still fail to return to equivalent, high-value building applications. Valuable material is downcycled, exported or lost from the construction supply chain altogether, creating unnecessary demand for primary production and increasing embodied carbon. At a time when every tonne of carbon matters, this is a problem the industry can no longer afford to overlook.

At TECHNAL, we believe the conversation must move beyond recycled content alone. While the use of low-carbon materials remains essential, the greater opportunity lies in keeping materials in circulation for as long as possible. The industry needs to think not only about the carbon impact of products entering a building, but also about what happens to those products when that building reaches the end of its life.

This requires a different approach to how aluminium is designed, specified and recovered. Circularity is not achieved through a single product innovation. It depends on linking every stage of the value chain, from design and fabrication through to demolition, segregation, collection and reprocessing. Products must be designed for disassembly. Materials must remain traceable. Recovery must be considered at the outset of a project rather than at the point of demolition.



TECHNAL's closed-loop model combines these principles with Hydro CIRCAL® aluminium to create a practical pathway for circular construction. Aluminium recovered from old windows, doors and facades can be reprocessed and returned to the value chain as new high-performance building systems, reducing reliance of energy-intensive primary production while preserving material value.

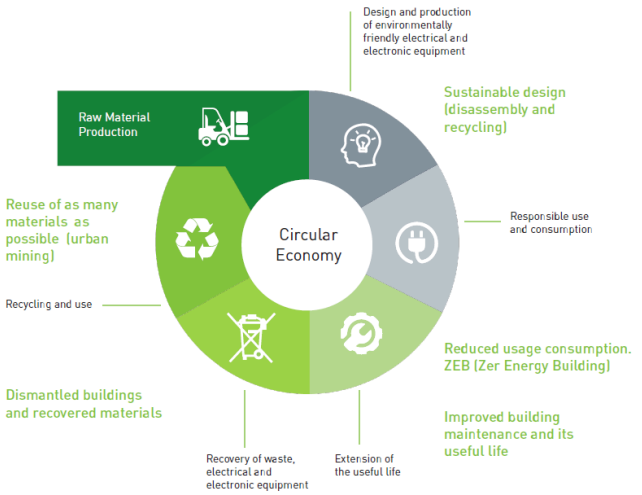
The carbon benefits are compelling. Recycling aluminium requires around 95% less energy than producing primary aluminium. Hydro CIRCAL® 75R, supplied as standard across TECHNAL systems, contains a minimum of 75% post-consumer recycled content and delivers substantially lower embodied carbon than conventional primary aluminium. Together, these measures provide immediate carbon savings while supporting a longer-term circular economy for the built environment.

Importantly, this approach is already being applied in practice. Projects including Mercury House in London and Broadcasting Tower in Leeds have demonstrated how aluminium from existing buildings can be recovered, processed and reintroduced into new systems.

These schemes show that circularity does not require new technologies or fundamental changes to project delivery. The processes exist today and can be implemented within established construction frameworks.

The challenge now is scale. Net-zero ambitions will not be achieved through incremental improvements alone. They require a shift in how the industry views materials and resources. Buildings should no longer be seen as the end point of a product's journey, but as temporary repositories of valuable materials that can be recovered and reused repeatedly.

Closed-loop aluminium offers one of the clearest opportunities to reduce embodied carbon while supporting a more resource-efficient construction sector. The question is no longer whether circularity is possible. It is how quickly the industry can make it standard practice.





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TAKING THE PRESSURE OFF PROFILE CUTTING

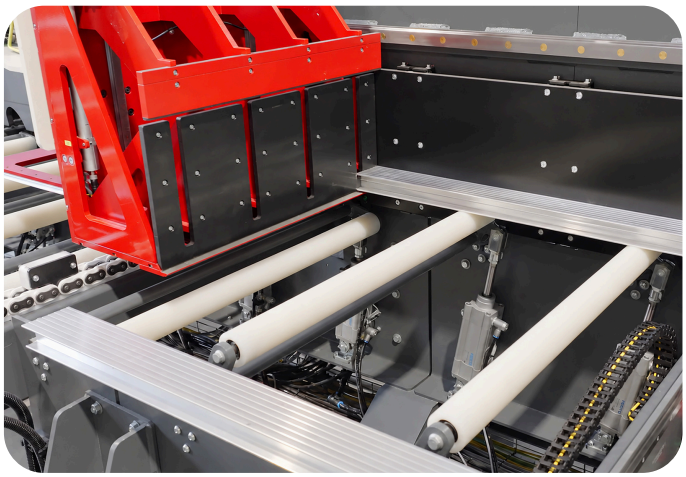
IMA SCHELLING GROUP

Profile cutting has traditionally been a labour-intensive process, particularly where delicate aluminium and non-ferrous metal sections are involved. First shown at ALUMINIUM 2026, IMA Schelling's new xm250 has been developed to change that, bringing a much higher level of automation to cross-cutting for UK manufacturers.

Anyone cutting aluminium profiles in volume will know that the saw is only part of the challenge. Handling the material, clamping it correctly and protecting thin-walled or delicate sections from damage can all have a major bearing on productivity and finished quality. IMA Schelling's new xm250 has been developed around those challenges.

Designed for aluminium and non-ferrous metals, including solid and hollow profiles, the cross-cut saw is aimed primarily at aluminium service centres, extrusion plants and businesses carrying out repetitive profile cutting.

"For many businesses, profile cutting still depends heavily on operator experience," says Markus Freuis, Managing Director of IMA Schelling UK. *"The xm250 changes that by automating far more of the operation and making production much more repeatable."*



The machine can automate the complete process from loading through to finished-part removal and, depending on the application, one skilled operator can supervise two or three saws – a significant advantage for processors under pressure to increase output without adding headcount.

A key part of the xm250 is its electronically controlled pressure beam. Once the profile type has been selected, the machine measures its height and width before automatically setting the clamping pressure and cutting parameters. This is particularly important with thin-walled profiles, where excessive pressure can distort the material before the blade has even made the cut.

"The xm250 is not simply about cutting faster," adds Markus. *"For UK processors, the bigger gain is consistency. It reduces the amount of manual input, makes the process more repeatable and gives operators greater control over the finished result."*

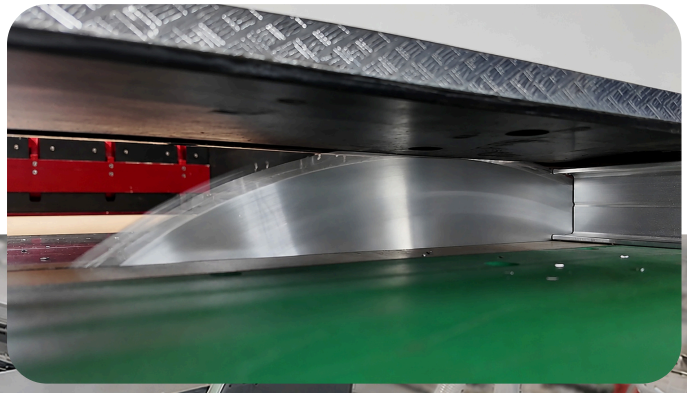


The working range is equally broad. The xm250 can process sections from 10 x 10mm square tubes through to round or square profiles measuring up to 250mm, with a 62kW saw motor, a cutting length of 650mm and infeed depths from 3,000 to 6,500mm.

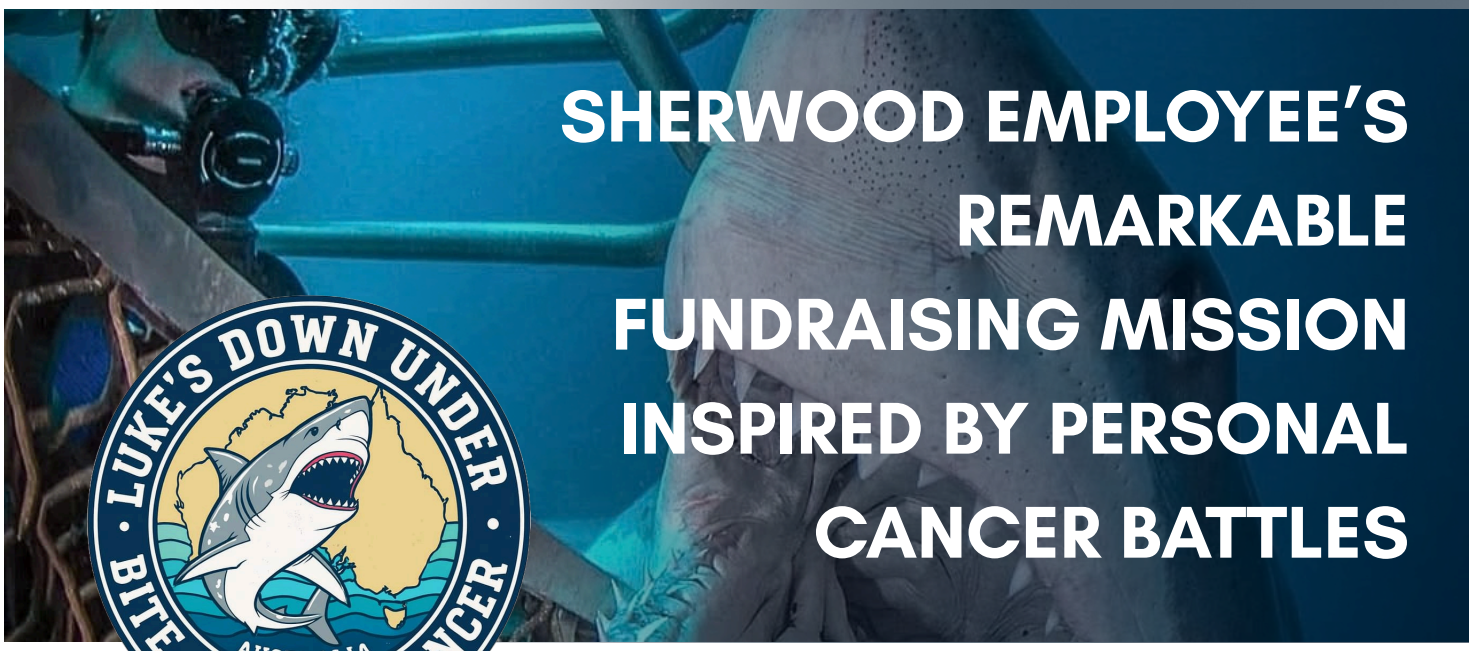
Different sawing modes allow throughput to be optimised, while narrow and very small parts can also be processed. The modular platform can then be expanded step by step towards unmanned production, with open interfaces allowing connection to production data and control systems.

A smaller xm150, offering the same footprint with a 150mm cutting height and 34kW motor, completes the range.

For more information, visit imaschelling.co.uk.







SHERWOOD EMPLOYEE'S REMARKABLE FUNDRAISING MISSION INSPIRED BY PERSONAL CANCER BATTLES

At Sherwood Stainless & Aluminium, we are proud to support Group Information Technology Manager Luke Rogers as he undertakes an extraordinary fundraising journey inspired by his own experiences with cancer and his determination to help others facing similar challenges.

Having been part of Sherwood for over seven years, Luke is well known for leading major business transformation projects and helping drive innovation across the organisation. Away from work, however, he has embarked upon a deeply personal mission to raise £20,000 for four cancer charities whose work supports individuals and families during some of life's most difficult moments.



Luke's motivation comes from first-hand experience. Four years ago, he was diagnosed with melanoma, a life-changing moment that came at the same time he and his wife discovered they were expecting their first child. The uncertainty of a cancer diagnosis contrasted sharply with the excitement of becoming a parent, creating an experience that left a lasting impact and reinforced the importance of family, health and making the most of every opportunity.

More recently, Luke faced another significant challenge when he was diagnosed with kidney cancer. Surgery, recovery and the demands of balancing family life with a senior leadership role required resilience, determination and perspective. Combined with the experiences of loved ones affected by cancer, these events inspired him to turn adversity into action and launch his fundraising campaign, **Luke's Down Under Bite Against Cancer.**

At the heart of the campaign is an ambitious challenge planned for Australia in October 2027. Luke will take part in a four-day live-aboard expedition to cage dive with Great White Sharks, chosen as a symbol of confronting fear head-on and stepping into the unknown. For Luke, the challenge reflects the courage shown every day by those living with cancer and the families who support them.

The fundraising journey has already generated fantastic support and momentum raising over £8,500 to date. In September, Luke took part in the Macmillan Mighty Hike at Blenheim Palace in the Cotswolds, completing the half marathon route dressed as a shark. The challenge attracted plenty of attention from fellow participants and spectators, helping to raise awareness of both the campaign and the vital role cancer charities play in supporting patients and their families.

The now familiar shark theme has also inspired the launch of the **Great Shark Draw**, a fundraising raffle that has received incredible backing from colleagues, customers, suppliers and friends across the wider business community. Through generous prize donations and raffle participation, supporters have helped drive fundraising efforts while bringing people together behind a common cause.

Reflecting on the campaign so far, Luke said:

"Cancer has affected my life in ways I never expected. Having faced both melanoma and kidney cancer, I've seen first-hand the impact it can have, not only on the person diagnosed but on everyone around them. This challenge is about giving something back to the charities that support people through those difficult times. The support I've received so far has been incredible, and I'm determined to make this challenge count."



Everyone at Sherwood Stainless & Aluminium is immensely proud and supportive of Luke's commitment and determination. His campaign embodies values that are important both within our business and across the wider aluminium industry: resilience, compassion, courage and community.

As preparations continue for the Australian challenge, we would like to thank everyone who has supported the campaign to date. Whether through donations, raffle entries, prize sponsorship or simply helping to spread the word, every contribution has helped move the campaign closer to its goal.

Fundraising will continue throughout the lead-up to the challenge, including the upcoming **Great Shark Draw**, and we encourage members of the aluminium community to follow Luke's journey and get involved where they can.

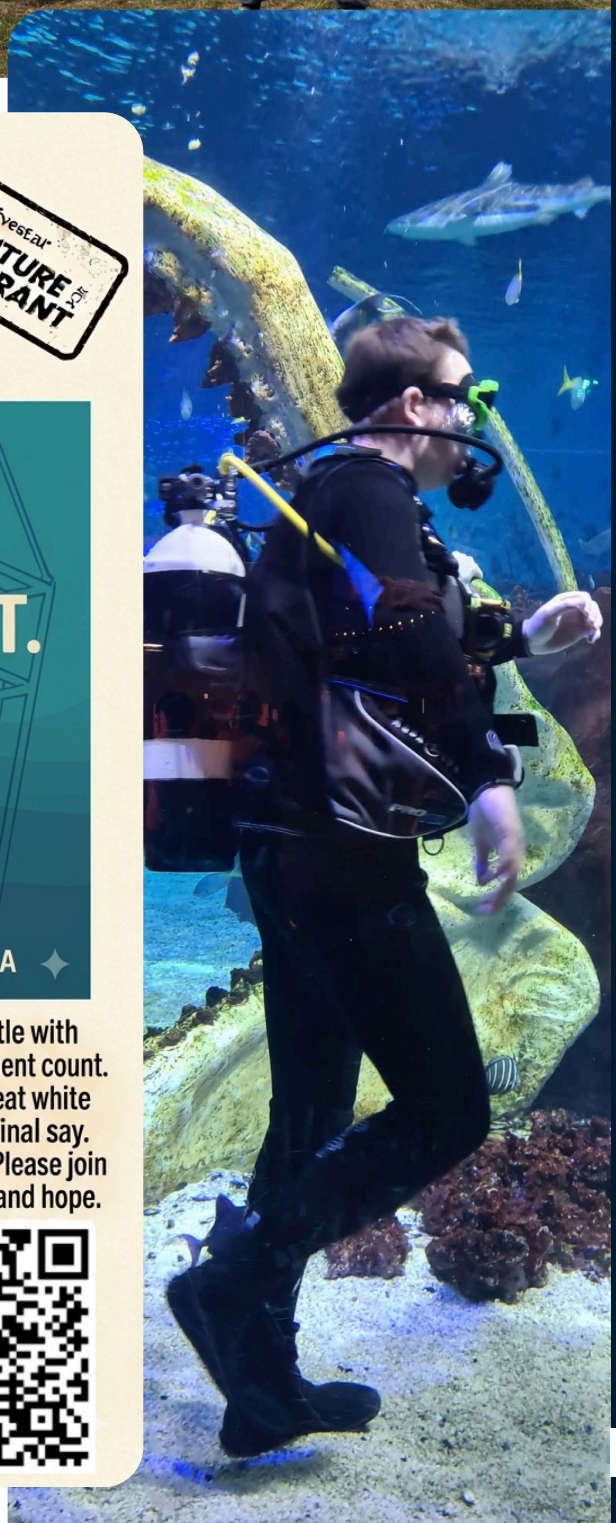
To learn more about **Luke's Down Under Bite Against Cancer**, enter the Great Shark Draw, or support the fundraising effort, please visit:

https://www.givestar.io/gs/lukes-down-under-bite-against-cancer

Together, we can help ensure that more individuals and families affected by cancer receive the care, support, and hope they deserve.







CBAMBOO

COUNTDOWN TO UK CBAM: READY OR NOT?

Date: 19th November 2026
Time: 13:00 - 21:00
Venue: London, UK

The UK's own carbon border adjustment mechanism starts on 1 January 2027. With just a few months left before full implementation, the CBAMBOO team is delighted to host an in-person event in London, bringing together the brightest minds on CBAM to exchange perspectives. Join us on 19 November for half a day of discussions covering the latest policy updates, what comes next, and the practical business insights you need to prepare. Stay on for drinks after the event to network with speakers and fellow participants.

Register Now: https://www.cbamboo.com/in-person-events/countdown-to-uk-cbam-ready-or-not/

ALUMINIUM OUTLOOK 27 | IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALFED ALUMINIUM FEDERATION
23-24 FEBRUARY 2027 • BUSINESS DESIGN CENTRE • LONDON

ALUMINIUM OUTLOOK 27

Date: 23rd - 24th February 2027
Venue: Business Design Centre, London, UK

Following a successful 2026 launch, Aluminium Outlook will return on 23-24 February 2027, once again in partnership with ALFED, hosted at the Business Design Centre, London.

Earlier in 2026, we launched Aluminium Outlook, welcoming the industry for a focused programme exploring the pressing challenges and opportunities shaping the metals industry. Attendees connected and shared insights with professionals from Arctial, Aluminium Dunkerque, Storvik, Norsk Hydro, Novelis, Hatch, Primetals, Gränges, Innoval, Precimeter, DTE Iceland, CBAMBOO, Speira, MICAS Simulations Ltd trading as QForm UK, and many more.

Building on the success of the debut, we are now bringing Aluminium Outlook to the industry bigger and better than before. The 2027 edition will once again bring together industry professionals and experts to explore the key developments, challenges and opportunities, alongside a new feature: The Health & Safety Update.

To learn more, please visit: https://aluminiumtoday.com/aluminium-outlook



HOUSE OF LORDS LUNCH

Date: Tuesday 8th June 2027
Venue: House of Lords, London, UK

Join us for the 2027 House of Lords Lunch, taking place on Tuesday 8 June 2027. This prestigious annual event brings together leaders from across the aluminium supply chain, industry stakeholders, and key decision-makers for an afternoon of networking, discussion, and engagement in a unique parliamentary setting.

Save the date in your diary and stay tuned, as registration details will be available soon.



BUSINESS BRIEFING & ANNUAL DINNER

Date: Thursday 30th September 2027
Venue: Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon

Join us for the ALFED Business Briefing & Annual Dinner 2027, bringing together the UK aluminium sector for industry insights, networking, celebration and the prestigious ALFED Awards. Stay tuned for early bird booking details coming soon.

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact sponsorship@alfed.org.uk.

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MANAGEMENT LIABILITY: PROTECTING THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE BUSINESS

For businesses operating in the aluminium sector, insurance traditionally focuses on physical assets, machinery, stock and liabilities. But there is another significant area of exposure: the decisions and actions of directors, officers and the company itself.

A Management Liability package policy is designed to provide protection against a range of risks faced by those responsible for running a business. While the precise cover varies between insurers, a typical package can bring together several important sections of cover.

Directors' & Officers' (D&O) Liability is at the heart of most management liability policies. It can protect individual directors and officers against claims alleging wrongful acts in their management capacity. Allegations can arise from shareholders, employees, customers, competitors, regulators or other third parties. Even where allegations are ultimately unfounded, the cost of defending them can be substantial.

Employment Practices Liability (EPL) provides cover for claims brought by employees or prospective employees, such as allegations of unfair dismissal, discrimination, harassment or other employment-related wrongdoing. In manufacturing, where businesses may employ sizeable workforces across production, engineering, warehouse and administrative functions, employment disputes can represent a material exposure.

Corporate Legal Liability protects the company itself where it is named in a claim. This is important because not every claim will be directed at an individual director.

For businesses, these covers can be particularly relevant. Consider a scenario where company receives notification that the HSE intends to investigate an incident at its premises following an employee injury.

The HSE requests interviews with the company's directors and senior managers and asks the business to provide documents, policies and records relating to health and safety procedures. The company's Management Liability policy responds to cover eligible costs associated with the investigation, such as legal representation and advice for insured directors and officers.

Alternatively, an employee might bring a discrimination or unfair dismissal claim following a restructuring exercise. The business may have followed a process it believed was appropriate but still face substantial legal costs defending the allegation.

For directors and business owners, the key point is that management liability is not simply another form of general liability insurance. It addresses risks arising from the management and governance of the business, including the potential personal exposure of directors.

For ALFED members, reviewing management liability cover should therefore form part of a wider risk-management programme. Businesses should consider their ownership structure, workforce, regulatory environment, overseas activities and contractual obligations when assessing appropriate limits and extensions.



Most importantly, management liability policies differ considerably. Businesses should review the definitions, exclusions, limits, investigation provisions and claims conditions to ensure the cover reflects their particular circumstances.

In an increasingly complex environment, protecting the business's physical assets remains essential — but protecting the people making the decisions can be just as important.

If you would like to know more about Management Liability covers or for us to provide a review, then please contact us or obtain more information:

https://www.amethystinsurance.co.uk/aluminium-industry-insurance/

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UK METALS EXPO 2026 BRINGS THE METALS SUPPLY CHAIN TOGETHER AT NEC BIRMINGHAM

UK Metals Expo returns to NEC Birmingham on 4th & 5th November 2026, bringing together the full metals value chain for two days of sourcing, insight and business connections at a pivotal time for the sector.

The event provides a meeting place for primary producers, stockholders, processors, fabricators, surface finishers, recyclers, technology providers, trade associations and manufacturing end users. Visitors can meet existing and potential partners, compare products and services, and hear directly from experts addressing the commercial, technical and regulatory issues shaping the industry.

For 2026, UK Metals Expo will be co-located for the first time with Advanced Engineering and Lab Innovations. Together, the three events are expected to welcome more than 15,000 attendees and over 750 exhibitors, creating a broader platform spanning metals, materials, engineering, advanced manufacturing and laboratory technology.

The combined format reflects the close relationship between material supply, product design, manufacturing capability and end-market requirements. For aluminium businesses, it offers access to a wider audience of OEMs, engineers, manufacturers, researchers and technology specialists, while giving the wider manufacturing community an opportunity to engage with the material, processing, recycling and supply-chain expertise on which their industries depend.





UK Metals Expo 2026 is supported by Tata Steel, Hydro Aluminium UK Ltd, Countrywide Metals Ltd and MEPS International. This support reinforces the event's practical focus on the challenges and opportunities facing the sector, from market conditions and procurement to trade policy, circularity, investment and lower-carbon production.

A central feature is the free-to-attend conference programme, which will run across four theatres:

- Big Issues
- Supply Chain, Trade & Policy
- Sustainability & Circular Economy
- Innovation & Technology

The programme will examine issues currently high on the agenda across the metals supply chain. Sessions will explore the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), trade policy, tariffs and quotas, steel pricing, procurement strategies, supply-chain resilience and critical-material availability.

Sustainability and circular-economy discussions will focus on decarbonisation pathways, recycling and reuse, scrap availability, lifecycle considerations and electric arc furnace developments. Innovation and technology content will address automation, process improvement, digitalisation, productivity, material development and the skills required to support the sector's future.

The speaker programme brings together perspectives from industry, government, research and representative bodies. Confirmed speakers include T. V. Narendran, CEO and Managing Director of Tata Steel; Gareth Stace, Director General of UK Steel; James Kelly, CEO of the British Metals Recycling Association; and Kaye Ayub, Senior Consultant at MEPS International.

Contributors will also include experts from organisations such as Hydro Aluminium, British Steel, JLR, Rolls-Royce, the UK Space Agency, UK Atomic Energy Authority, the Materials Processing Institute, Innovate UK Business Connect, HM Treasury, the Aerospace Technology Institute and the Confederation of British Metalforming.

With the UK metals sector navigating changing policy, evolving customer expectations and the pressing need to improve resilience and reduce emissions, the event is designed to move the conversation beyond broad ambition. It will provide a setting for businesses to share practical experience, assess new solutions and develop partnerships that can support their next stage of growth.

UK Metals Expo is relevant to businesses across the aluminium industry, from primary production and distribution to processing, fabrication, recycling and end-use manufacturing. The co-location with Advanced Engineering and Lab Innovations also provides an opportunity to understand emerging material requirements and connect with potential customers and collaborators from across the manufacturing ecosystem.

UK Metals Expo takes place at NEC Birmingham on 4 & 5 November 2026. Registration is free at ukmetalsexpo.com.



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