

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS

This year's GAI Education Awards Lunch was an unreserved success. Held at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington on 6th November, the event was attended by over 300 people – a record for this occasion. As well as showcasing this year's crop of successful Diploma students, the lunch saw, unusually, the inauguration of the new GAI President, Andrew Hall of GEZE UK Ltd and the announcement of his Vice President, Phil Newson of Allgood plc. Andrew Hall addressed the audience with his plans for the future and a digest of that speech can be found on page three of this Guild News.

With fifty successful students collecting their diplomas this year, the business part of the day was busy. Students had travelled far and wide to receive their certificates – a number of Häfele's students coming over from India especially for the occasion. All were rightly proud of their achievements after three years of hard work on the GAI's education programme. These students have invested time, energy and commitment into gaining these diplomas and, with the economic clouds gathering over the UK, their knowledge and enthusiasm will most certainly be at a premium in difficult trading conditions.

Finally the audience was regaled by Kriss Akabusi MBE, one of the most charismatic and thought-provoking speakers the GAI has ever had. He applied the lessons he has learned in his remarkable life – in children's homes, the army, as a top international athlete, and businessman – to our trade, inspiring and entertaining the audience along the way.

Gold Medal winner David Shoebridge with Keith Maer, Kriss Akabusi and Andrew Hall



Silver Medal and Pinnacle award winner Neil Furness



Bronze Medal winner Martin Lees



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**A**s the economic downturn takes hold it does not take a



seasoned business commentator to recognise that the coming year will be a difficult one. Many companies will be examining their business model and striving to adapt to the requirements of the marketplace.

It is against this backdrop that I'm delighted that so many member companies have seen the wisdom of investing in their people by registering them on this year's GAI Education Programme. There has been a record number of enrolments onto Level 1 of the programme and very healthy enrolment numbers for Levels 2 and 3.

Commitment to a well trained and qualified team will be a vital ingredient to successfully combating the demanding market conditions.

Inevitably there will be pressure on business overheads and, sadly, this may lead to adjustments to staffing levels. Please remember that the Guild has commissioned an important Membership Service which provides free telephone helpline support and guidance, to help you manage such changes.

Roger Vincent, RV Associates, can be contacted on tel: 01372 462262 and he will be pleased to provide advice on all employment matters.

On behalf of the team at Stepney Green I would like to extend our best wishes for a successful 2009.

*Gary Amer*

Gary Amer Chief Executive



## RIGHT ON SPEC

The Guild of Architectural Ironmongers (GAI) has received a record number of entries for its biennial Specification Awards with well over 100 buildings currently being inspected by a team of AIs and RIBA nominated assessors. Sponsored by the GAI in conjunction with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the awards are designed to identify and reward excellence in the specification of architectural ironmongery.

This year, as well as the established six categories - **Commercial, Established, Public, Renovations, Residential** and **International** buildings – the GAI has initiated a class which recognises and celebrates the best architectural ironmongery in **Sustainable** buildings.

The awards recognise design excellence in architectural ironmongery specification projects and are awarded to the whole specification team of architect and architectural ironmonger, highlighting the importance of the partnership between these two professional disciplines. The winners will then be announced at an awards lunch to be held at **Lord's Cricket Ground on 30th March 2009**.



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## HALL OF FAME

After presenting outgoing President Wayne Harris with his Past President's medal, Andrew Hall made his inaugural address to the GAI Education Awards Lunch.

He covered a number of topics outlined here in brief:

**Past President:** he thanked Wayne on behalf of the Guild for his hard work over two and a half years when he presided over the appointment of a new CE, the organisation's rebranding, saw education enrolments reaching record levels and the introduction of GuildMark.

**Vice President:** Andrew welcomed his new Vice President, Phil Newson of Allgood plc, stating he was delighted to be working with an AI of such standing and experience. John Jefferies, of Laidlaw Solutions Ltd, has agreed to become **Treasurer** and complete a new Officer team.

**The future of the GuildMark scheme:** GuildMark is perhaps the most significant development for the GAI and this industry for many years.

Some of the biggest names in the industry have joined the scheme. However, it still has some way to go to become the mark of excellence that we all want it to be. The GAI will continue to work closely and effectively with RIBA to ensure that the scheme takes on a high profile with specifiers and architects alike.

**Member benefits:** Andrew announced that he will be increasing the focus on benefits for smaller AIs – the lifeblood of our industry, and also through the individual ironmongers via the Institute. As well as the technical support and the improved education services, members have a free employment law advice line, stronger ties with lobbying and petitioning organisations like the Construction Products Association and more effective external communication to get our case heard.

**Technical support:** the Guild is working hard to ensure that it takes a more proactive role in advising and



policing our industry on a technical level. A technical help-desk, more in-depth technical publications and unprecedented representation from the Guild on standards committees across Europe will give GAI members access to a valuable technical resource.

**Policing the industry:** the GAI will look to take a tougher and more proactive stance on the monitoring of what companies are claiming in their literature and on their web sites. It is not intended to blunt any company's commercial advantage, but the Guild is determined to ensure that all claims are honest and can be substantiated by the relevant certification if necessary. He announced that the GAI is in discussion with Bodycote Warringtonfire to examine ways of becoming

more proactive in the policing of product claims in the industry thereby ensuring Guild members' specifications are accurate and beyond reproach.

**Education:** changes within the Education Programme see the migration of manuals to an open learning style and this will be progressed further so that they are all presented in this format. A more effective and efficient education process will be coming on stream with the greater use of the web allowing easier, clearer and quicker communication between students, examiners, markers and tutors.

**Networking:** changes will be seen in the way that the GAI conference is organised this year, it will be held at a central, easily-accessible location, with a modified, shortened format which it is hoped will make it more attractive and affordable for smaller AIs to attend and reap the benefits that this event offers.

## CONFERENCE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The 2009 GAI Conference will be taking on a new style to make it more accessible, affordable and streamlined for members, large and small. The event will benefit from a central, easily-accessible location, and a changed, shortened format.

Put the dates in your diaries now: **Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd May 2009** at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel & Country Club in Warwickshire.

The GAI is putting together a programme of focused activities and

top speakers for two days of serious business and relaxation.

The hotel is set in the rural Warwickshire countryside, yet only four miles from the NEC complex and Birmingham Airport. As well as top notch golfing facilities for the annual golf tournament the hotel boasts excellent leisure and business facilities.

The event brochure and booking form will be available in February on the GAI web site at [www.gai.org.uk](http://www.gai.org.uk) and by post.





**gai** guild of architectural ironmongers  
advancing architectural ironmongery

**technical update**

# CE MARKING – THE NEXT LEVEL

Now that the industry has got used to the concept of providing CE marked products for fire and escape doors, it's time to refine the operation and rigorously screen out lurking rogue products.

**Current status**  
CE marking of door hardware which complies with a harmonised standard is not yet compulsory in the UK, but sooner or later, it will be. In the meantime, CE marking remains the easiest way to show that a product complies with the essential requirements of the Construction Product Regulations. There have been a few well-publicised cases of CE marks being falsely applied, but the great majority of suppliers and stockists probably believe that their own stock is correctly labelled. However, it is also quite possible that some of those items are wrongly identified as CE marked, or bear an incorrect classification code. This is in breach of at least three pieces of legislation and could lead to breaches of parts of the Building Regulations.

**How can this happen?**  
A simple example is finishes. A manufacturer might test a lock, a hinge or a door closer with its standard surface finish applied. The classification code contains a digit that records the grade of corrosion resistance achieved. The CE mark and the classification code are valid ONLY for the product and finish tested. They do not cover any other finish in the range.

## MARKING OUT PERFORMANCE

The Guild of Architectural Ironmongers (GAI) has issued guidance to specifiers with regard to the complex area of CE Marking of British and European door hardware. This area, which has long been a source of confusion for stakeholders, continues to change and evolve across Europe.

Product standards must be "applicable" before products can be CE marked. Some requirements – such as fire resistance performance of a fire-resisting doorset – are mandatory. Others – water and air permeability for instance – will be voluntary. The actual requirements will vary from state to state, but the European standards cover all eventualities.

The new Technical Update clears up the confusion which often exists in this area and is available for download at [www.gai.org.uk](http://www.gai.org.uk) in Publications.

## KEEP US UP TO DATE

With a database of students, Diploma holders, Reg AIs and others running into thousands, it is only possible to keep it bang up to date if you let us know of any changes to your personal circumstances.

Should you move companies, change your address or any other of your details change, please inform us as soon as possible. To be sure of getting the changes made promptly and accurately, please email Sue Speed on [soozy@gai.org.uk](mailto:soozy@gai.org.uk)



## MAKING YOUR VOTE COUNT

This year's Institute AGM will include the announcement of the winner of the inaugural **Paul Lewis Trophy** for Customer Service. The new award, sponsored by Royde and Tucker, is awarded to the group, individual or company that has made an outstanding commitment to customer service throughout the year.

Before his death in 2008, Paul was a keen supporter of the Institute and customer service was an issue very close to his heart. This trophy is a fitting tribute to his memory.

Nominations for the award can be made by anyone within the AI industry, using the form which can be downloaded from the IAI website. The closing date for nominations is 12 February 2009 and the winner will be chosen from amongst the nominees by the Institute's national executive committee.

The Institute of Architectural Ironmongers has announced that its AGM will be held at the Oxford Belfry Hotel, Thame in Oxfordshire on Saturday 4th April 2009.

The AGM, one of the best attended and enjoyable events in the AI calendar, will take place on the Saturday afternoon and be followed by a dinner dance in the evening.

**Booking forms for the AGM and dinner can be obtained from the GAI HQ on 0207 790 3431 or at the Institute website at [www.iai.uk.com](http://www.iai.uk.com).**



institute of architectural ironmongers

## diarydates

You can now access **Institute** diary dates on the website: [www.iai.uk.com](http://www.iai.uk.com)