



FEDERATION OF
**MASTER
BUILDERS**

Project Growth

The FMB Strategic Plan 2024-2027



Build with confidence

Foreword

“ For more than 80 years, the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) has championed the needs of SME and micro building companies, by providing a strong voice and services to help members run their businesses more competitively. That need remains, which is why the FMB is continuously reviewing what it can do better and anticipating future trends to ensure we remain relevant as a membership organisation.



Our new three-year strategic plan, Project Growth, builds on the work we have done to raise standards by ensuring all Master Builder companies are independently inspected and abide by the FMB's Code of Practice.

Our focus over the next three years is to grow the membership by promoting its value to a wider range of businesses and clients who embrace the credibility the FMB provides and seeks to strengthen.

This strategic plan provides us with a roadmap towards growth, to ensure a stronger future for the FMB and the members that we represent. ”

Brian Berry

Chief Executive, Federation of Master Builders (FMB)

FMB National President Chris Carr



The UK construction industry contributes nine per cent of the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Overview

The FMB is the largest trade association in the UK construction industry representing small and medium sized (SMEs) and micro construction companies in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Since 1941, the FMB has championed continuous improvement in the building sector, however it is more than a traditional trade body. The FMB also has its own insurance company, FMB Insurance Services Limited (FMBIS), which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the FMB and forms part of the FMB Group.

In essence the FMB has three core functions:

Accreditation

The FMB has robust entry criteria that underpin its credibility and reputation as an organisation committed to high standards in the building industry. Any company wishing to join the FMB must undergo a 14-point entry check, as well as an independent inspection of work. The FMB currently rejects up to 20 per cent of all applications that do not adhere to strict criteria. All members agree upon joining to abide by the FMB's Code of Practice and to ensure there is full compliance. The FMB has its own Standards Committee to adjudicate when work falls below the standard expected of a Master Builder company.



Support for members

As a membership organisation, the FMB provides a range of support services to help its members operate efficiently. These include business helplines, the Find A Builder service to help members win work, webinars on industry related topics, business coaching and e-learning, plus numerous regional and national events such as the prestigious Master Builder Awards dubbed the Oscars of the building industry.



Voice

The FMB was set up to give building companies a united voice to succeed in a competitive market. That need still remains, which is why the FMB focuses on active engagement with governments in all four home nations of the UK, as well as with national and local media and social media platforms. The FMB works collaboratively with industry partners to provide active representation at all levels of the construction sector, ensuring the voice of Master Builders is heard.



The UK construction industry

The UK construction industry contributes nine per cent of the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and employs nearly three million people. For every £1.00 invested in construction, it generates £2.84. Even better is the fact that for every £1.00 spent on construction, 92p remains within the UK. The vast majority of companies, some 99 per cent, are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro companies.

Members of the FMB operate within three main sectors:

- **Repair, maintenance and improvement (RMI)**
- **House building**
- **Commercial**

Recent years have been economically and politically turbulent which has created a



volatile market for FMB members to operate within. The building industry has been resilient, but there has been a marked fall in enquiries and the house building sector has been declining. Unfortunately, SME house builders have also suffered, and they have been leaving the house building market. However, there are new sectors, most notably in the area of making our existing buildings greener and more energy efficient. The retrofit market has potential to



3 million employed
in construction in the UK



A sustainable barn conversion by A J Field Developments Ltd

be worth several billions each year if the right policy framework can be put in place.

The devastating Grenfell fire in 2017, which resulted in the tragic deaths of 72 people, has changed the regulatory framework for everyone who works in the building industry. The drive is towards higher standards as demonstrated in the Building Safety Act 2023 and the Future Homes Standard for all new homes. The 'golden thread' of accountability in the Building Safety Act applies to all buildings, which will affect members' responsibilities in the domestic building sector during the coming months and years. It is against this backdrop that the FMB's drive towards higher standards becomes ever more important.

Vision

To become the 'go-to organisation' for all who value building quality.

Mission

During 2024-2027, the FMB's Vision will be supported by five key strategic objectives, focused on the following areas of growth:

1. Membership growth
2. Promotion
3. Standards
4. Commercial
5. Data review



Values

As an organisation, the FMB will focus on three core values to underpin how it works:



Integrity

to be honest, fair, impartial, and decent



Inclusivity

to allow everyone to be themselves in a supportive and positive working environment



Innovation

to encourage original and creative thinking



Gavin McGuire and Nicola De Sousa at Homebuilding & Renovating Show, Birmingham

Strategic objectives

From 2024 to 2027, the FMB will focus on five key strategic objectives to drive the future growth and strength of the organisation.

(i) Membership growth

Over recent years, the FMB has focused its attention on raising standards within its membership, with the introduction of an independent inspection and a 14-point entry check for any building company wanting to join. Now that all our members are independently inspected, we are focused on growing the membership by making the construction industry, consumers,

and the Government more aware of what it means to be a Master Builder company. We will promote the FMB as the 'go-to' organisation for any building company that values high standards and is seeking credibility. In support of this mission the FMB will:

- **Develop an integrated sales and marketing strategy** – the FMB will review the recruitment process and develop an integrated sales and marketing strategy to drive member leads and increase membership growth.
- **Raise FMB brand awareness** – we will work towards boosting the FMB brand, which will include

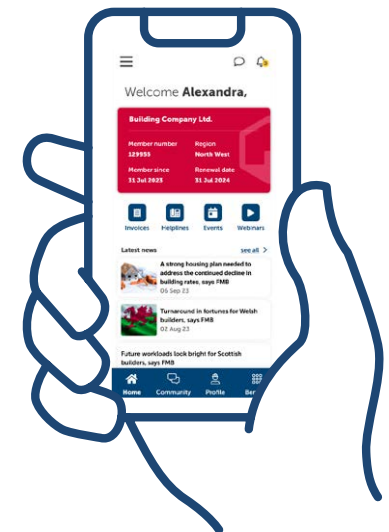
benchmarking consumer, industry and government awareness. Each of these audiences require a different approach and tone. We will make messaging faster, more concise, and relevant to members' needs so they know what action is required. This will be closely linked to our key strategic objective on promotion.

- **Better use of members to promote the FMB** – we will make better use of our members to promote the FMB. To assist this we will create an online shop to allow members to source marketing materials that will help them to promote them as Master Builder companies. In addition, we will support members in becoming advocates in the media as well as at consumer and industry events and meetings.
- **Launch the FMB App and develop the Find a Builder service** – the FMB will continue to develop its digital services, including the launch of an FMB App for all members to access FMB services and actively participate in member community groups.

(ii) Promotion

The FMB was originally set up to enable small building companies to have a collective voice and to help them to secure work. The need for a strong voice is as great now as it was in 1941. We know when the FMB is in the media, lead generation is significantly better performing, which is why the FMB will focus on better ways to promote itself.

Going forward, the FMB will focus its activities on engaging closely with members and consumers to better understand what they need from the FMB.



- **Raise our media profile** – the new communications strategy will allow for a dedicated resource for media relations and encourage the greater use of members to promote the FMB. We will focus on raising the media profile of the FMB and its members. We will be more assertive, relevant and varied in our messaging with an emphasis on social media. We will also be encouraging, via our UK member network, more members to actively promote their membership of the FMB.
- **Create online communities** – the FMB will develop online communities to reflect particular specialisms such as house building and retrofit. The launch of the FMB App will help deliver this aim, alongside greater use of podcasts, improved functionality of the website to make it more interactive, and greater insight into the potential for Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **Increase use of digital marketing** – in an increasingly digital age, the FMB will develop a new marketing strategy with a strong focus on digital channels in order to maximise our spend and improve return on investment.

- **Campaign approach to policy and public affairs work** – the FMB has good links into the government in all four home nations of the UK. The benefits of the FMB's policy and public affairs work will be made more visible to the membership. Adopting a more visible campaign approach will help involve more members, which will demonstrate the value of the work that is being done to boost the FMB's reputation and credibility.
- **Develop the events strategy** - the FMB hosts a range of national and regional events, including the national conference and a range of policy events such as the annual FMB parliamentary reception. One of the most popular FMB events is the biannual Master Builder Awards, which is highly regarded by members for the recognition and promotion it generates across the UK. We will develop an events strategy to address the purpose of functions, define target audiences and reach, and consider how best we can use these events to help promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the construction sector.



TV's Nick Knowles presenting the 2023 Master Builder Awards

(iii) Standards

The FMB is committed to raising standards to help improve the reputation and credibility of the building industry. Over recent years, the FMB has moved away from being a traditional trade association to one that actively accredits its members – as we know the FMB members value this. Going forward, the FMB will explore the viability of creating its own independent inspection company as part of the FMB Group. We will also assess the need and market opportunity to introduce an Insurance Backed Guarantee (IBG) for all members' work. We know from recent research that 100 per cent of consumers surveyed were interested in the idea of an IBG for building work.

- **Roll out of the Insurance Backed Guarantee (IBG)** – an IBG is currently available for members, providing up to 10 years' cover for works undertaken. Going forward the FMB will focus on its TrustMark members securing an IBG, with a longer-term aim of all FMB members being able to offer an IBG for jobs undertaken. Benefits will include keeping the FMB offer relevant, helping to increase consumer protection, generating increased traffic to the Find a Builder (FAB) service, and increased relevance of the FMB with local authorities.



- **Develop the training and development offer** – the FMB currently offers a popular members' coaching programme for those wanting to develop their business. This includes a range of free e-learning programmes, and signposting to the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) for those wanting professional qualifications. These three initiatives will be developed to create a more integrated approach to allow members to take full advantage of the FMB training and development offer.
- **Implementation of the Building Safety Act** – the FMB will work hard to ensure members are kept informed about the implications of the Building Safety Act and help provide the necessary guidance.
- **Promote licensing of the building industry** – the FMB has long campaigned for the introduction of a licensing system for all construction companies. Currently anyone can call themselves a builder, which allows market entry without proof of any competence. As a consequence, the reputation of the building industry, and in particular, competent and

experienced building companies, has been negatively impacted. The FMB will continue to campaign for licensing of all builders, to improve standards and uphold the integrity of the construction sector.

- **Review the viability of the FMB to become an accreditation body in its own right** – consideration will be given to the FMB becoming an industry accreditation body in its own right. As an example, the FMB could become the 'Builders' Accreditation Scheme (BAS)', allowing small building companies to state they are a 'Professional Licensed Building Company.'

(iv) Commercial

All of our commercial activities are designed to support the membership offer and increase non-subscription income.

- **Create a new commercial strategy** – the FMB will develop a new commercial strategy to define its commercial offer for both members and commercial partners. We will review our commercial partnerships both nationally and regionally to ensure members derive the maximum benefit.

- **Maximise the FMB's investment portfolio (property and financial)** – the FMB's property portfolio is its most important financial asset, positively contributing to the FMB's bottom line. Going forward the FMB will continue to review and invest in its properties for both investment and staffing needs. This will include a review of property yields, options to upgrade the properties, and assessing the need for any new property. We will also continue to review the FMB's financial investments to ensure the best return.

- **Review the viability of setting up an Inspection Company** – the introduction of an independent inspection for a building company wanting to join the FMB, and the requirement to undertake subsequent inspections to remain within the organisation, is an integral part of the FMB membership proposition and a key marketing tool. There is real value in our members having an independent inspection from a consumer's point of view. The FMB has the option to set up its own independent inspection company, which would operate



The FMB London office, located in Ely Place

within the FMB Group. This will allow the FMB to do more inspections and for these to be conducted on a competence-based model. A wider range of services, particularly in relation to disputes, could also be offered and marketed as a consumer benefit, which in turn would be revenue generative.

- **Grow FMBIS** – FMB Insurance Services Limited (FMBIS) was restructured in 2022 following a contraction in the insurance industry. Over 2024-2027, FMBIS will consider how best to promote and grow its services. This will include launching an integrated website and marketing activities with the FMB. It will also play a leading role in collecting and analysing members' information from the roll out of the IBG.
- **Enhanced financial and performance reporting** – the FMB will develop enhanced financial and performance reporting to support the objectives of the strategic plan.

(v) Data Driven Growth

The effective use of data is critical as it allows for better business decisions to be made. As a membership organisation for SME and micro building companies across the UK, it is absolutely critical we understand as much as we can about the makeup of our members' businesses. The FMB will develop more tailored services that are better able to meet the needs of individual members by capturing data such as principal trade, location, number of employees, areas of specialism and industry accreditations.

Throughout 2024-2027, the FMB will develop the FMB App and Find A Builder service, create a new member recruitment process, integrate FMBIS within FMB to bring efficiencies and lead generation opportunities, and review the potential use of Power BI to drive better understanding and visualisation of our data.

The result will be to offer a more bespoke service to members and better promotion of members'

various interests within the construction sector. It will also enable the FMB to develop commercial opportunities that are better targeted at members' needs.

- **Member data collection** – the FMB will focus on the collection of members' data to better understand the representation of the current FMB membership and the take up of services. It will also help identify future new markets, which will result in improved service delivery for our members.

- **Data collection to help reduce carbon emissions** – the FMB supports the creation of a low-carbon built environment to help the UK meet its target of becoming zero carbon by 2050. The FMB will benchmark its carbon emissions and, in line with best practice, produce a strategy to further reduce its carbon footprint.

Resources and Delivery

A detailed delivery plan will identify resources for the strategic plan, and will ensure the strategic objectives are delivered.





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Founded in 1941, the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) is the largest trade association in the UK construction industry representing the interests of micro, small and medium-sized building companies. The FMB is independent and non-profit making, lobbying for members' interests at national, regional and local levels. The FMB is a source of knowledge, professional advice, and support for its members, providing a range of modern and relevant business building services to help them succeed.

fmb.org.uk