

# TRADE LINES

**KB** Kent Blaxill

THE NEWS AND VIEWS AT KENT BLAXILL

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## All Hands on Dec to help a children's group

Are you a community group or a sports club that works with children? Are you struggling to update a shabby building or clubhouse due to lack of funds? Kent Blaxill may be able to help!

Kent Blaxill, together with Crown Paints, is excited to launch its 'All Hands on Dec' campaign to renovate a community project.

James Park, KB decorative manager, said: "We are looking for interesting projects up to a value of £10,000 that will really make the difference. This can be an internal or external makeover of a building or outdoor space."



"Your project details can be uploaded to the All Hands on Dec website and shared via social media. We will measure the interest in your project by the number of likes and re-tweets."

The deadline for entries is June 30, 2017. Over the summer, local tradesmen will be invited to pledge their time and skills to join KB staff in carrying out the refurbishment.

Submit your details now at: [allhandsondec.kentblaxill.co.uk](http://allhandsondec.kentblaxill.co.uk)



Bright outlook: the glass sales team

## Glass changes sharpen focus

The department is now concentrating on glass sales after a decision to halt installation services

Following a strategic review of operations, the Kent Blaxill glass department will in future concentrate on glass sales and will no longer offer glass installation services.

The company sees improved opportunities for increasing glass sales when it is no longer running an installation service that was in effect competing with potential customers.

Simon Blaxill, managing director, said: "The glass department will continue to offer the same range of products for sale, ranging from painted glass and sealed units to uPVC windows and secondary double glazing, as

well as all types of glass, from toughened to laminated, cut to any shape or size.

"Over the last year we have seen strong growth in decorative product operations, opening three new branches and creating 12 new jobs, and will be opening more branches with more jobs in the year ahead. Our buildings materials business has also been growing.

"However we have found that in offering a glass installation service, which is a very small part of our business, we are in many instances trying to compete with our own trade customers. In offering purely glass sales we will actually be able to sell more glass, which could create more

jobs. The glass department is also now a much better fit with the rest of the company.

"Sadly, though, it is the end of an era as Kent Blaxill has operated a glass installation service for much of its history. Unfortunately this no longer makes sense for us in today's marketplace."

The 13 strong glass sales team now reports to Nick Scully, Colchester branch manager, with Adam Smith as glass department manager and Lee Miles as his supervisor. "There has been a very positive reaction to the change from the sales team," said Simon.

"We have been helping some of the glass installations team to set up their own businesses or to find other employment, four of them in other KB departments."

**INSIDE** ■ Bury goes 'back to basics' ■ Market Harborough branch opens ■ Cycle sprint finish

## Hunter Plastics back by demand

**Hunter Plastics drainage and rainwater products have returned to Kent Blaxill – back by popular demand.**

Andy McMahon, KB head of sales and product – building materials, said: “We used to stock Hunter Plastics products nearly eight years ago. The company was very supportive to KB and our customers and it was a very popular range, but we switched away from them as they were no longer available to our buying group.”

“We have now reintroduced the complete range back into our Colchester and Bury branches where they are already proving very popular.”

● Another new product in stock is Brett Paving. As part of landscaping expansion plans, Brett concrete block and decorative paving products are now available in Colchester and Bury, complementing Global Stone’s natural stone products.

## Tyra completes apprenticeship



**Tyra Chater has now completed her apprenticeship and joined the company on a full time basis. She is the second Customer Service apprentice to join the KB staff in the last year.**

Tyra, aged 17, joined Kent Blaxill as a customer service apprentice in February 2016 working in the admin department while also undertaking regular college assignments.



**New broom: Jason Brightman, right, is overseeing an overhaul of the Bury yard and branch**

## Bury goes ‘back to basics’

**Jason Brightman has taken over as branch manager at the 22-person Bury St Edmunds store.**

He brings 16 years of experience in building supplies, including the last six as manager of a large branch for a national company.

Since starting in his new role, Jason has concentrated on a “back to basics” branch overhaul.

“I have stripped things back so that everything is in front of the customers for them to see

what we have got. On the heavy-side have been making sure we have no gaps in our stock, with colleagues looking at both the heavy and lightside products. We want to ensure we are a one-stop shop.

“In March we will be relaunching the DecXpress daily delivery service for decorative materials.

“There are a lot of good members of staff here and I have been concentrating on making sure that everybody is working

closer together as a team.

“We have also done a lot of work rebuilding the yard so that it is more friendly for customers and easier for our operatives to work in.

“We want to be close to our customers and look at the branch through their eyes – and already we are seeing some people coming back to us.

“In the future I will start to look at what areas we can grow within the branch to take it to the next level.”

## KB support for Bury crash memorial

**Eighteen Bury St Edmunds Rugby club players killed in the 1974 Paris air crash were remembered recently with the unveiling of a granite memorial – which is complemented by 30 sq m of sandstone paving and aggregates donated by Kent Blaxill.**

The Bury rugby players were returning from an England-France international when they were among 346 people who died in the tragedy.

“After we were approached about the memorial by Bury



Developments we were very pleased to be able to donate the materials,” said Chris Peverett,

KB territory account manager. “Bury Rugby Club is one of the top 70 clubs in the country now and we have taken a number of very enjoyable corporate hospitality packages with the club this season.”

Austin Cornish, managing director of Bury Developments, who lost his father in the crash, said: “We raised £160,000 for St Nicholas Hospice Care with a cycle ride from the crash site back to Bury to mark the 40th anniversary of the crash, but we wanted to build a permanent memorial as well.”



# Harborough store opens

Stuart Yates, president of the Painting and Decorating Association, cut the ribbon to officially open a new Kent Blaxill decorative store in Market Harborough during March which will serve both the professional decorator and home DIY markets.

It is the 14th store to be operated by the company.

The 2,900 sq ft branch, which will be managed by Scott Templeman, is located at Unit B1, Welland Business Park, Market Harborough, LE16 7PS.

Declaring the branch open, Stuart Yates said: "This is a fantastic facility – if it was in Chesterfield where I am based I would definitely be using it."

Simon Blaxill, KB managing director, said: "We have until now described ourselves as an East Anglian company but this branch is taking us into the Midlands. It is really important to us to get right the family firm ethos with good service, and we



are really looking forward to building a strong relationship with Market Harborough."

James Park, KB decorative manager, said: "It stretches our boundaries and will also enable us to service some of the bigger contractors working in Leicester, Kettering and Corby."

Scott Templeman, store manager, said: "The store has a

big impact and I am really looking forward to providing a great service and building a relationship with our customers."

The first customer when the store opened was Michael Johnson of MT Johnson Decorators, who said: "The store has everything you need, has a good set up and is very conveniently located."



## Glen targets trade kitchens growth

Glen Curtis is KB's new trade kitchens designer.

His appointment follows the retirement of John Hardacre, who had been with the company for 10 years.

Glen has 15 years of experience in kitchen design with a

major national company.

"He has a strong customer base," said Nick Scully, Colchester branch manager. "He has quickly assimilated the KB company culture and there has already been a very positive reaction from customers."

## Specialist advice for Essex County Cricket

Essex County Cricket ground in Chelmsford has been smartened up over the winter with new paint and coatings supplied by Kent Blaxill.

Zinsser, Rustoleum and Dulux products have been delivered from the new KB Chelmsford branch to coat the various buildings, including the pavilion, stands and rooms.

Graham Childs, Essex County Cricket Club Facilities Manager, said: "Our maintenance programme this year has included painting the outside of our main pavilion with specialist coatings for which Kent Blaxill recommended the correct products to use in the various areas.

"We have also now been using the KB heavyside as well for materials to extend some of our grandstand seating.

"It has been a very efficient operation liaising with Andy Whitney and Roy Seymour at Kent Blaxill and it has been working very well for us."

Andy Whitney, KB decorative sales manager, said: "Having just opened in Chelmsford it is great to have such a prestigious customer to help raise our profile. KB is also looking forward to a season of exciting Natwest T20 Blast cricket."

## Step into a virtual bathroom

Customers can take a step into the future when they visit the KB showrooms and take a virtual reality tour of the new bathroom they have had designed. An Oculus Rift headset is available, together with a new virtual reality theatre, where they can inspect and test every moving detail of the bathroom they want.

"The software creates a 4D representation of the design, and for the person wearing the headset it is as though you are actually in the room. You can open up units and see what is inside and look around everywhere to see what it is like to live in," said Nick Scully, Colchester branch manager.

The software is operated at Kent Blaxill by Paul Morten Hart.

"The Virtual World software from Logicom works with any of the bathrooms designed from our catalogues, such as Duravit, Imperial and Heritage" said Nick.



## Charity cut ends hair vigil

**Tony Taylor has raised £940 for Macmillan Cancer Support after growing his hair for a year.**

His head was finally restored to his usual 'No:1 grade' look by clipper-wielding colleague Samantha Dudley-Hayes (pictured).

Tony, 60, was raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support because of the support they gave to a close family member.

Tony received donations from staff and customers.

● Meanwhile a Kent Blaxill Christmas Jumper Day raised £200 for Save the Children.



## Kent Blaxill Stores

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☎: 01245 262279  
chelmsford@kentblaxill.co.uk

**COLCHESTER**  
CO2 9JY  
☎: 01206 216000  
Sales@kentblaxill.co.uk

**BRAINTREE**  
CM7 3GZ  
☎: 01376 335999  
Braintree@kentblaxill.co.uk

**BURY ST EDMUNDS**  
IP33 3TX  
☎: 01284 762401  
Bury@kentblaxill.co.uk

**FAKENHAM**  
NR21 8SX  
☎: 01328 864713  
Fakenham@kentblaxill.co.uk

**HUNTINGDON**  
PE29 6EB  
☎: 01480 435731  
Huntingdon@kentblaxill.co.uk

**IPSWICH**  
IP3 0AB  
☎: 01473 341330  
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**KIRBY CROSS**  
CO13 0LY  
☎: 01255 679161  
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**MARKET HARBOROUGH**  
LE16 7PS  
☎: 01858 469980  
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**NORWICH**  
NR2 4UX  
☎: 01603 628973  
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**SAFFRON WALDEN**  
CB11 3GB  
☎: 01799 521150  
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**STAMFORD**  
PE9 1XT  
☎: 01780 753822  
Stamford@kentblaxill.co.uk

**SUDBURY**  
CO10 2FT  
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Sudbury@kentblaxill.co.uk

**WOODBIDGE**  
IP12 1RB  
☎: 01394 384255  
Melton@kentblaxill.co.uk



@KentBlaxill and @KBDecorating

## Kitchen on show at Fenwick

**A Kent Blaxill Laura Ashley kitchen has gone 'live' at the upmarket Fenwick store in the centre of Colchester.**

The display is part of swap deal between the two companies that sees some Fenwick products, such

as multi-coloured Le Creuset sets, on display in the KB showrooms.

The kitchen at Fenwick will host a Neff oven demo day on April 22. Kent Blaxill will have a demo day hosted by Neff staff on April 15. Both displays will feature Neff slide and hide, and steam ovens.

## Sprint finish ends cycle race thriller



**The fastest ever edition of Colchester Cycling Club's Jock Wadley race was decided this year in a full-blooded bunch sprint, with Steele Von Hoff overhauling triple Olympic champion Ed Clancy, who slipped back to fourth.**

Kent Blaxill was a main sponsor of the event, held in March, which has become one of the top races in the UK cycling calendar.

Simon Blaxill, Kent Blaxill managing director, said: "This year's Wadley was a thrilling event with mainly Elite and First category riders from trade teams across the country looking to make a name for themselves. Riders and groups attempted to break clear throughout, but in the end the peloton came together for a flatout bunch sprint. Clancy had possibly put too much work into some of the breaks and was not able to hold on to his lead in the final metres."



## Andy is first landscape rep

**Andy Tanner is out on the road as Kent Blaxill's first ever landscaping representative. His trainee role will see him covering Colchester and Essex.**

"We want to give landscaping materials more of a push, but our builders' merchant representatives have their hands full selling a full range of KB products," said Andy McMahon, KB head of sales and product – building materials.

"Andy has worked previously in our landscaping department at Colchester and so has an expert knowledge of the products in what we see as a sector with massive growth potential for us."