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QUARTERLY
BULLETIN
REARO®
WINTER 2025

COMMERCIAL

Rearo has signed contracts with two major UK suppliers of kitchen and bathroom equipment, following our recent national expansion and delivery footprint. Pages 3 & 8 >>

REARO TEAM

Wedding bells sounded this summer for Sophie Bartoli, the branch manager at our Northampton branch. We wish her and her new husband, Jacob, a life of joy. Page no 3. >>

GREEN NEW DEAL

Rearo has agreed a partnership with the Dow Group, to recycle 36 tonnes of waste per month, meaning that over 98% of our physical waste is now reused, positioning us as one of Scotland's most sustainable businesses. We were previously a finalist in the Scotland Excel Supplier Excellence Awards for Environmental Practices. Page 5 >>

SPORTS

Rearo has announced the renewal of its sponsorship agreement with Neilston Football Club for the 2025/26 season. Page 8 >>

Rearo launches new sterile wall covering

Scotland's national football stadium among first to sign up for new cladding brand

Rearo has launched a cutting-edge sterile wall covering to enhance hygiene and durability in healthcare, catering, education, sports and commercial sectors.

Stericlad is a PVC-based hygienic cladding that offers a seamless, easy-to-clean surface, making it ideal for environments that require stringent infection control. Among the first customers for the new product was Hampden Park, Scotland's national football stadium.

The proprietary brand is available in satin white, gloss white, and a selection of pastel colours, ensuring functionality and aesthetic flexibility. Stericlad's non-porous, hygienic surface resists bacterial growth and can be easily disinfected, making it appropriate for hospitals, dental surgeries, care homes, and food preparation areas.

The material is 2.5mm thick, providing robust protection against impact and wear while maintaining a sleek, professional appearance. It is available in 3050 x 1220mm sheets, with white satin also offering 2440 x 1220mm.

A range of matching trims and adhesives ensures a complete system for professional installers. Stericlad can be installed using H-section trims for a clean, professional look, or joined together using a welding rod for joints in high-specification environments. The product is compatible with two-part adhesives for permanent bonding or silicone-based adhesives for simpler applications.

Graham Mercer, managing director of Rearo, said there are plans to expand the Stericlad range, with additional colours and specialised variants, including reduced recycled PVC options for sustainability-focussed projects. He added: "Stericlad represents a significant step forward in hygienic wall cladding. We've listened to the needs of healthcare providers, caterers, and commercial contractors who demand a product that combines durability with ease of maintenance."

Graham went on: "Unlike traditional laminates, Stericlad is a solid PVC sheet, meaning it won't delaminate or degrade over time. We're confident it will become a go-to solution for high-hygiene environments."

Rearo is a leading UK manufacturer and distributor of high-quality decorative surfaces, including kitchen worktops, bathroom wall panels, and PVC ceiling systems. Headquartered in Glasgow, the company operates across multiple UK locations – in Aberdeen, Rosyth, Washington, Skelmersdale, and Northampton – and is renowned for its customer service, innovation, and community engagement.

Rearo's ability to handle large-scale, nationwide distribution has positioned it as a preferred supplier for major UK merchants following the collapse of International Decorative Surfaces (IDS) last year.

As well as securing contracts with Eurocell and Benchmarx, the company is also in advanced negotiations with a major UK DIY chain to supply part of its £5million-a-year worktop business.

SCOTT IS NEW FIELD SALES REP FOR NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND

Rearo has appointed a new field sales rep to cover the North and North-East of Scotland.

Scott Runcie (pictured above) is based at the company's recently launched Aberdeen branch.

Covering the area is the final piece of the jigsaw in making Rearto a national company, with the ability to deliver to commercial customers anywhere on the UK mainland.

Before joining Rearo, Scott was a showroom manager for a local bathroom company in the Granite City, for whom he had worked for the past 10 years.

He says: "I was ready for a new challenge, fresh opportunities, and the chance to advance my career. Rearo has a fantastic reputation in the industry, and I am delighted to be part of its team.

Outside of work, Scott supports Cove Rangers and Liverpool FC, and he is a WWE-style wrestler. He has a lively, four year-old cocker spaniel called Murphy.

Trade counter manager Peter brings Canine comfort to local hospice

Employee's voluntary pet therapy visits are lifeline for those with end-of-life conditions

For Peter McCrone, a typical day involves managing the busy trade counter at Rearo's Glasgow branch. But in his own time, his most important role is that of a volunteer, bringing smiles and solace to patients at The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice with his two trusted, furry companions.

Peter is a dedicated volunteer with Therapet, a registered charity that organises therapeutic pet visits to care homes, hospitals, and hospices across Scotland. The initiative leverages the simple, powerful bond between humans and animals to offer comfort, companionship, and a significant boost to wellbeing for those facing challenging times. He was inspired to sign up after witnessing the incredible work of hospice staff firsthand when his father-in-law and aunt were patients.

Now, he gives back by taking his two dogs, Nina, a white Bichon Frise, and Daisy, a brown Cavachon, on visits to the Dumbreck-based hospice. "They are both small, and they love to meet new people, so they are perfect for this," Peter explained. Their gentle and friendly nature is ideal for the calming visits, which can have a profound impact on residents."

Reflecting on the value of the service, Peter shared a direct insight into his rewarding work. "Therapet is a beacon of compassion," he said. "Volunteering there has allowed me to witness the healing power of animals. It's an honour to be part of such a meaningful cause."

Therapet, operated by the Canine Concern Scotland Trust, was established in 1988. The service relies on volunteers and their temperament-assessed pets to provide regular, scheduled visits. The charity emphasises that, for many isolated individuals, these canine visitors can be a highlight of their week, sometimes even sparking moments of joyful connection where other methods have failed.

Nestled in the heart of Glasgow's southside, The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice provides exceptional, compassionate palliative care for the city's residents, who are facing life-limiting illnesses.

Moving to its purpose-built, state-of-the-art facility in Bellahouston Park in 2018, the hospice continues a long and cherished legacy that began in the city's East End in 1980.

It offers a vital sanctuary where patients and their families receive holistic support, focusing not just on medical needs but on emotional and spiritual wellbeing, ensuring dignity, comfort, and quality of life are paramount, all provided free of charge thanks to immense community support and fundraising.

For more information on Therapet or to learn about volunteering, visit www.therapet.org.uk.

Best friends: Peter, with his beloved pets Nina and Daisy. Inset below left, Michael at his retirement send-off, with colleague Jamie Campbell

New Recruit

Stuart Culross
Driver/Warehouse
Northampton

Stuart has had several previous jobs, working as a van and forklift driver, as a warehouseman and as a tig welder. He was in his previous job for 10 years and joined Rearo because he fancied a change.

Happy (semi) retirement to Michael

The familiar hum of the factory floor at Rearo has sounded a little different recently after colleagues bid a fond, but not final, farewell to one of their most versatile and dedicated team members.

Michael Kennedy, a man who has become synonymous with skill and reliability at the Govan factory, is officially retiring after 35 years of service.

However, in a twist that will surprise no one who knows his work ethic, Michael's retirement comes with a promise: "I've retired but I'll be back."

Michael's long journey with Rearo began in 1989, behind the wheel of a delivery van. But his innate curiosity and drive to learn quickly saw him move from the driver's seat to the heart of the manufacturing process.

Reflecting on his long and varied career, Michael said: "I started out as a driver, then I moved on to hot presses, PVA and PUR presses. Then I moved on to edge banders, post forming, panel saws and beam saws. I can really do everything in here, even drive the forklift."

He added: "I love working here... it's brilliant. Although I have officially retired, I don't plan to stay away for long. I'll be back."

Michael's willingness and ability to master every piece of equipment in the plant, made him an invaluable asset and a living repository of the company's operational knowledge. His cheerful presence and pride in his work have made him a beloved figure among workmates.

"It's people like Michael who are the true backbone of a company like ours," said Rearo managing director Graham Mercer. "His dedication over the last 35 years has been absolute. The sheer depth of knowledge he has accumulated across every department is staggering, and has been crucial to our success. While we wish him a tremendously happy and well-deserved retirement, we are also delighted that he plans to stay connected. That's not just good for us; it's a testament to the kind of company Rearo is – a family."

Michael's wife, Eleanor Kennedy, who has worked alongside him at Rearo for many of those 35 years, said: "It's been my privilege to see, not just the brilliant worker everyone here knows, but the dedicated man I've shared my life with. The factory won't be the same without him by my side, but we're both looking forward to this next chapter. And, knowing Michael, his 'retirement' will just mean he has more time to tell everyone how to do the job properly," she added with a laugh.

Wedding day joy for Sophie and Jacob

Everyone at Rearo was delighted to share the wonderful news that our Northampton branch manager, Sophie Bartoli, recently married her long-term partner, Jacob, in a beautiful summer ceremony held in their hometown.

The couple, who were teenage sweethearts, chose the historic Northampton Guildhall for their wedding, before celebrating with their closest family and friends at a reception held at the Maule Collective.

Reflecting on her special day, Sophie said: "It was a small wedding, just close family and friends and it was a wonderful day. The weather was beautiful, in fact it was very, very warm."

She added: "We had been looking forward to the day for so long and it didn't disappoint. Getting married is a very special occasion and it was amazing to have everyone we love there to witness it and to share in our happiness."

Jacob and Sophie have been together since she was 16 and he was 17, having met at the Roadmender music venue. After going out together for a number of years, Jacob finally popped the question in September 2023 and Sophie didn't hesitate in saying yes. They had spent the previous few months planning their special day which they always were adamant should be in their home town. Sophie is a valued and longstanding member of the Rearo team. She first joined us in 2020 as a sales and admin co-ordinator, demonstrating incredible dedication. After a brief period away, we were thrilled to welcome her back, in June 2022, as manager of the Northampton branch, where she continues to be an inspirational leader for her team. Everyone at Rearo sends our warmest congratulations to Sophie and Jacob.

Managing director Graham Mercer added: "On behalf of the entire company, I want to wish Sophie and Jacob every happiness for the future, as they begin this exciting new chapter together. Sophie is a fantastic manager and a wonderful person, and we are all thrilled for her."

Rearo secures worktops deal with Benchmarx

Rearo has agreed a new contract with Benchmarx, the kitchen showroom division of Travis Perkins, to supply 13 decorative worktop designs across its direct-to-store and direct-to-consumer operations.

The deal, which began in July, reinforces Rearo's position as a trusted supplier to leading UK merchants. Benchmarx, which operates 120 branches across the UK, has been seeking a new supplier following the closure of International Decorative Surfaces (IDS) last year, after it entered administration.

Rearo was selected for its "quality, reliability, and nationwide distribution capabilities" following a competitive tender. The contract strengthens the Glasgow-based supplier's relationship with the Travis Perkins Group, and highlights its ability to meet the logistical demands of large retailers.

Rearo's Northampton branch, located just 100 yards from Benchmarx's head office at Lodge Farm Industrial Estate, ensures seamless supply chain integration, according to managing director Graham Mercer.

He said: "We are thrilled to expand our long-standing relationship with the Travis Perkins Group through this contract with Benchmarx. This win reflects our commitment to quality. Having undergone a rigorous audit of our environmental and corporate social responsibility (CSR) credentials, we're proud to have achieved a Low Risk rating, further validating our responsible business practices."

A spokesperson for Benchmarx said: "We are delighted to partner with Rearo as we refresh our worktop offering. Their reputation for high-quality products, combined with their strong distribution network, makes them an ideal supplier. We look forward to working together to deliver an exceptional range for our customers."

To support this and other recent contract wins – including negotiations with Eurocell – Rearo has invested significantly in its distributionnetwork, including:

- Opening a new Aberdeen branch to serve northern Scotland.
- Expanding its fleet with a 7.5-tonne curtain sider and eight new Renault 3.5-tonne trucks (due November 2025), all equipped with advanced safety and low-emission technology.
- Enhancing IT systems for real-time stock visibility and delivery efficiency.

Rearo's in-house delivery fleet and strategically located branches, ensure it can meet the needs of major merchants requiring direct-to-branch deliveries for bulky items like worktops and wall panels.

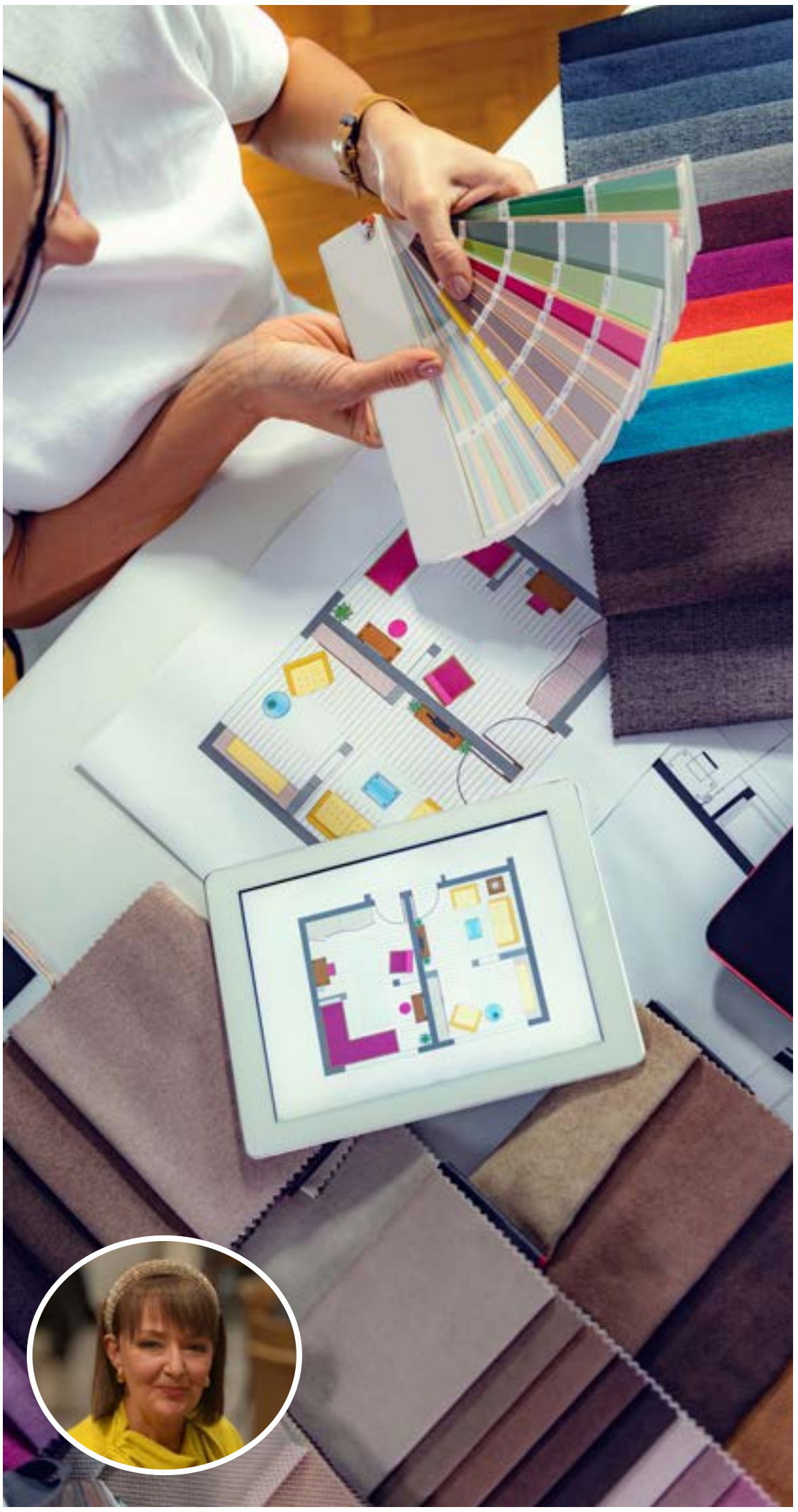
Benchmarx, part of Travis Perkins PLC, operates 120 kitchen showrooms across the UK, serving trade professionals and homeowners with a focus on quality and design. Headquartered in Govan, Glasgow, Rearo operates across multiple UK locations and is renowned for its innovation, customer service, and community engagement.

New Recruit

Naomi Hood
Marketing manager

Naomi has worked in marketing for eight years, holding roles with shower brands Aqata and Aqualux and, more recently, with Fonteyn, a manufacturer of hot tubs and swim spas. She came across Rearo in a previous role, where she used our products and, being familiar with both the products and the team, she had a positive impression of the company. Naomi runs half marathons for fun.

How Tracey Influenced our design Evolution



For more than three decades, Rearo has been a trusted name in the UK's kitchen and bathroom surfaces industry, renowned for its high-quality laminates, wall panels, and innovative design solutions. But behind every successful brand, lies a team of creative minds who shape its aesthetic direction – and one such influential figure is Tracey Gray, an interior designer, whose expertise has helped guide Rearo's product ranges and design philosophy for several years.

From advising on seasonal trends, to shaping the company's meeting spaces for architects and designers, Tracey's role as a creative consultant has been instrumental in ensuring Rearo's offerings remain fresh, relevant, and aligned with the evolving tastes of homeowners and trade professionals alike.

Her relationship with Rearo spans 15 years, beginning when she joined the company as a design sales specialist following a career shift. Her background in interior design made her a natural fit, and she quickly became involved in selecting and promoting new product ranges.

She recalls: "Graeme [Mercer, Rearo's managing director] thought it would be good for the business if I came on board. I had worked in design sales for a few years, and even after I left, they kept bringing me back to help with room sets and styling."

In recent years, Tracey's role has expanded further. She now contributes to design blogs, offering insights into emerging trends and demonstrating how Rearo's surfaces can be incorporated into contemporary interiors. Additionally, she has been tasked with elevating Rearo's meeting spaces – transforming them into sophisticated environments that appeal to architects and designers attending CPD (continuing professional development) sessions. She said: "We want the space to reflect the kind of high-end, aspirational design that professionals expect. It's about creating an environment that inspires creativity while showcasing what Rearo can do."

One of Tracey's key contributions has been her input into Rearo's product selections, helping the brand stay ahead of the curve in an industry where trends can shift rapidly. But how does she identify what's next in kitchen and bathroom design?

"Trends are cyclical – they never really disappear, they just evolve," she says. "Sometimes it starts with a whisper, an idea that gains momentum through trade shows, social media, or even celebrity influences."

Tracey, pictured right, cites major exhibitions like Decorex, IMM Cologne, and Salon del Mobile as key sources of inspiration, where cutting-edge materials and finishes are often debuted years before they hit the mainstream. However, she is careful to distinguish between short-lived fads and enduring design principles. "I don't follow trends for the sake of it – especially in residential design, where longevity matters. A home isn't like a retail space where you can refresh the look every season. People want surfaces and finishes that will stand the test of time."

Sam takes Rearo's story into schools

Here at Rearo, we're incredibly proud of our team and its diverse talents, both inside and outside the factory. One colleague who has been doing remarkable work beyond his daily role, is Sam Spiers, a key member of our manufacturing department. Sam recently visited St. Roch's High School to deliver a powerful and inspiring workshop to pupils, focusing on building confidence and demonstrating how to thrive in a professional career while being hard of hearing.

Sam's presentation gave students a fascinating insight into life at Rearo. He detailed the industry we work in, the high-quality products we manufacture right here in Govan, and the specifics of his own job as a skilled machine operator. The core of his message, however, was one of resilience and achievement.

Sam, pictured inset, shared his personal journey of successfully completing a demanding four-year woodworking machinery apprenticeship, which involved attending Forth Valley College in Falkirk one day a week. Sam openly discussed the challenges he faced as a deaf individual navigating education and the workplace, transforming those challenges into a powerful lesson on perseverance for the young audience. This school visit was part of a wider initiative with BDA Scotland's Deaf Roots & Pride (DRP) Transitions project, which delivered a series of workshops in February led by inspiring deaf role models. Sam's workshop, focused on his path to becoming a machine operator, was a standout session, showing deaf young people a clear and successful route into skilled employment.

More staff news from Rearo branches around the country

Daniel Bolton
Skelmersdale
Promotion

Daniel has been promoted from sales and warehouse operations to the role of branch manager following the retirement of Peter Kiely. Good luck to Dan on his well-deserved promotion.

Jacob Doran
Skelmersdale
Promotion

Many congratulations to Jacob who has recently been promoted from apprentice to sales and warehouse assistant. Jacob has been excellent since starting with Rearo and very popular among staff and customers.

Peter Kiely
Skelmersdale
Retirement

We wish Peter the very best in his retirement. Peter was instrumental in shaping the Skelmersdale branch since it became part of Rearo three years ago. It is testament to Peter's leadership skills that he leaves behind a strong and well-prepared team.

Rearo agrees milestone deal with Dow Group to recycle 98% of waste

Rearo has agreed a partnership with the Dow Group, to recycle 36 tonnes of waste per month. This deal means more than 98% of our physical waste is now reused, positioning it as one of Scotland's most sustainable businesses.

Rearo – which supplies a range of UK companies and organisations, including fast food restaurants, supermarkets, and high street chains – is now seeking Zero Waste Scotland Green Champions certification. We have also been a finalist in the Scotland Excel Supplier Excellence Awards for Environmental Practices.

> **Our commitment to circularity is at the heart of our business. This partnership with Dow Group allows us to significantly reduce our environmental impact**

In 2022, the company introduced some of Scotland's most ambitious sustainability targets, to recycle virtually all of the paper, packaging, glass, timber, plastic, and textiles used in production processes at our Govan plant.

The collaboration with Dow Group, a waste management company based in Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire, is central to our strategy, with a key process taking place at Dow's recycling plant in Hexham, Northumberland.

A significant portion of our recycled waste is wood (approximately 60% of the 36 tonnes sent monthly), with around 40% of MDF-based waste being re-used in the process.

Managing director Graham Mercer said: "Our commitment to circularity is at the heart of our business. This partnership with the Dow Group allows us to significantly reduce our environmental impact and move closer to our goal of achieving zero waste status."

He added: "We are proud to be recognised as a leader in sustainability within Scotland and are committed to continuous improvement."

Our environmental initiatives are led by an internal green team, that was established prior to the COP26 conference, held in Glasgow in 2021.

The launch of the war in Ukraine the following year, also helped to turn around our environmental performance, when supply chain pressures forced us to switch sourcing raw materials from Russia to Ireland.

We were forced to look elsewhere, following an embargo and sanctions on goods purchased from the eastern European state, as a result of Russia's invasion of its neighbour.

While we continue to source some birch plywood from Finland, we have now switched the bulk of our material to exterior grade MDF, sourced from sustainably managed forests, supplied through the Medite Smartply production and research plant in Clonmel, County Tipperary. Plywood is the traditional choice for wall panels, made from multiple layers of natural thin veneer that are glued together. In contrast, MDF is engineered by breaking down softwood residuals into wood fibres, which are then combined with wax and resin to create a smooth surface.

This move not only addressed supply chain issues, but also significantly reduced our transport costs and emissions, while allowing us to transition to a more sustainable material.

While focusing on recycling, we also support local charities and community initiatives and we are working to achieve ISO 14001 certification.

Mercer, pictured inset, said: "Our sustainability efforts are multi-faceted. As well as developing 'environmental passports' for our products, we are working with Planet-Mark to ratify and certify their sustainability claims."

He added: "our customers can be assured that our products are made sustainably."

Breakdown of Recycled Waste

• Timber	24*	75.8%
• Cardboard	2.12	6.7%
• Textiles/Carpet	1.15	3.6%
• Waste to energy	1.113	3.5%
• Rubble	0.98	3.1%
• Metals	0.87	2.7%
• Other Packaging	0.64	2.0%
• Plastic	0.457	1.4%
• Plasterboard	0.24	0.8%
• Glass	0.09	0.3%

*Tonnes

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Charting a course towa

A trusted supplier for the domestic kitchen and bathroom market, Rearo is rebalancing its focus on commercial contracts, says managing director **Graham Mercer**

The headquarters of Rearo hums with a quiet, purposeful energy. The scent of freshly-cut laminate hangs in the air, a tangible reminder of the product that has been the company's lifeblood for over three decades.

In his office, overlooking the busy factory floor, managing director Graham Mercer is charting a course for the most significant strategic shift in the company's history. The family-owned firm, renowned for its high-pressure laminate wall panels and worktops, is pivoting, deliberately and decisively, away from the retail spotlight and towards the demanding world of commercial construction.

For Mercer, a man whose accidental entry into the family business turned into a lifelong passion, this isn't just a change in sales targets; it's a fundamental reimagining of Rearo's identity.

"We're at a crossroads," he begins, his Shetland accent softening the directness of his statement. "The market is shifting and the greatest risk for us would be to stand still. For years, we've been a trusted name in British homes, famous for our Selkie® shower panels. But the future, the sustainable, high-growth future for Rearo, lies in us becoming the UK's go-to partner for commercial interiors."

The numbers tell part of the story. Currently, around 70% of Rearo's £10.5 million turnover comes from retail, with 30% from commercial contracts. Mercer's two-year vision, outlined in a detailed strategic plan, aims to dramatically rebalance that ratio.

The ambition is to grow turnover to £11.8million in the coming year and £12.3million the next, all while defending a robust 50% gross profit margin. But the financials are merely the scorecard. The real game is being played in the specifications of architects, the tenders of major contractors, and the production of standardised, system-based products for airports, stadiums, and government buildings.

Mercer's entry to the industry was, by his own admission, unplanned. "It was almost accidental, not a conscious career decision," he recalls. "I graduated from Napier University with a business degree and was supposed to cover for my father for a week. I became engrossed and never left."

> **The market is shifting and the greatest risk for us would be to stand still**

That temporary stint began a deep education in the intricacies of manufacturing and sales, and the harsh realities of business, including painful lessons like a bad debt from a customer going bust and a costly refit of HMS Ark Royal where, against his better judgement, he followed outdated Ministry of Defence specifications. "I allowed myself to be intimidated rather than to trust my own instincts," he says, the memory still a clear professional scar.

These experiences forged a leader who values resilience and delegation. "The most valuable lesson I've learned is the idea of empowerment," he states. "It's about arranging training for people to develop and giving them the space to take ownership." This philosophy is crucial now, as the strategic pivot demands new skills and mindsets across the entire 60-strong workforce.

So, what will Rearo look like in September 2027, if the plan succeeds? "In two years, I want Rearo to be seen as a significantly strengthened, high-quality Scottish manufacturer with a robust financial position and an enhanced market standing," Mercer explains, his eyes scanning a schematic of a new product system on his desk.

"But crucially, we will be recognised not just as a leading domestic supplier, but as a serious, innovative force in the commercial interiors sector."

This vision is built on three core pillars. The first is to capitalise on competitor collapse: The recent demise of rivals like IDS has created a vacuum in the supply of kitchen worktops to major trade distributors. Mercer sees a clear, time-sensitive opportunity.

"We've already secured new contracts with players like Benchmarx. Our goal is to grow this worktop division into a £1million-plus business, establishing ourselves as a key, UK-wide supplier to national distributors like Wickes and Eurocell. It's about moving quickly to capture that market share."

A two year plan to secur

Here is a summary of Rearo's plan to pivot its approach towards achieving a more commercial-led business strategy by 2027:

Vision & Financial Goals:

- Achieve a turnover of £12.3 million by FY 2026-2027, maintaining a 50% gross profit margin.
- Become the leading UK-wide partner for bespoke laminate fabrication and commercial interior solutions.

Market Position & Growth Strategy:

- Capitalise on competitor collapse (e.g., IDS) to capture significant market share in kitchen worktops, targeting sales exceeding £1million.
- Shift from a domestic focus to a commercial systems approach, promoting products like Triumph cubicles and Stericlad wall lining to architects and specifiers.
- Strengthen relationships with major national distributors like Benchmarx, Wickes, and Eurocell.

Operational Execution & Investment:

- Overhaul ageing machinery, with an immediate priority being the investment (£110k-£135k) in a ne advanced Beam Saw t improve efficiency an capacity.
- Address critical infras issues, including re-ro Glasgow factory and p the relocation of the R branch.
- Mitigate supply chain particularly ensuring r access to quality raw m like plywood.

People & Culture:

- Bridge the skills gap b implementing an adv training programme (1 month per employee) commercial teams and

rds a commercial focus

Tight ship: Graham Mercer is confident of buy-in from staff and customers for his ambitious plan

The second pillar is a systems revolution, currently taking place in the industry. The heart of the new strategy is a move away from, purely bespoke, fabrication towards a portfolio of standardised, proprietary commercial systems.

Mercer reels off the names like a general listing his new regiments: the Triumph cubicle range, Stericlad™ hygienic wall lining, the planned re-launch of the Buhne™ system. "The commercial world runs on systems," he emphasises. "Architects and specifiers need reliability, repeatability, and compliance. By developing these 'off-the-shelf' solutions, we make it easier for them to choose Rearo. We're building on early successes in projects like Heathrow Airport and Hampden Park, but we need to systemise that success."

The third pillar is a reinforcing of Rearo's foundations. Even as the focus shifts, the retail business, particularly the iconic Selkie® brand, will remain a vital part of the company's operation.

"The ambition is to be a premier, high-quality British manufacturer, distinct from low-cost import competitors," Mercer says. "Our domestic reputation for quality is a springboard for our commercial ambitions. It proves we can deliver excellence."

The path from vision to reality is fraught with challenges, and Mercer is candid about the scale of the task. "The primary challenge is a skills gap," he states bluntly. "Transitioning to a commercial focus, demands a completely new methodology. Our sales team is brilliant, but commercial sales operate through specification, via architects. It requires a mastery of complex project tracking, estimating, and technical drawing – skills we are now systematically building through our new HR Manager."

This upskilling extends to the factory floor. Operatives need training to handle more advanced machinery and reintroduced product lines, like solid surfacing. This people centric challenge is compounded by a broader societal issue Mercer feels keenly. "I find that young people often aren't socially ready for work. They're capable, but they're not ready for what a work ethic is, how you respect colleagues and authority. We end up doing a lot of soft work on that, almost socialising them into the world of work," he says. Government could help more through schools, preparing people for industry."

To support the new commercial focus, a significant, planned capital investment programme is underway.

The immediate priority is replacing ageing beam saws with a new, technologically advanced model, costing up to £135,000. "This isn't just an upgrade; it's a necessity to handle the larger sheets and more complex components of commercial work," Mercer explains.

> "The sustainable, high-growth future for Rearo lies in us becoming the UK's go-to partner for commercial interiors

Longer-term ambitions include a panel-sizing line to automate production. The cpmpany's physical infrastructure also needs attention, particularly the Glasgow factory, which requires re-roofing to fix persistent leaks. There are also plans to relocate the Rosyth branch to a more fit-for-purpose facility.

"You can't ask a team to perform at its best in a building that's fighting against them," Mercer notes. "Part of being a desirable employer is providing a modern, efficient, and safe environment." This includes plans for new canteens and even gym areas, all part of a strategy to make Rearo a "great place to work" and attract the best talent. When discussing team building and long-term culture, Mercer's passion is palpable, and he readily cites an unusual source of inspiration: Sir Alex Ferguson. "His book on leadership really resonated with me," he says, a smile breaking through. "It was all about building a team, about how teams work.

"Sir Alex is a folk hero in Govan, and his principles of discipline, trust, and long-term development are directly applicable to what we're trying to do here. You don't build a winning team overnight; you invest in youth, you train them, you give them a system to believe in, and you back them."

This philosophy informs his approach to the company's apprenticeship programme, which has become more critical than ever. "I've gone from typically hiring people in their 30s to taking on late teens.

We have to grow our own talent. It requires taking on individuals before you strictly need them and investing in their long-term development. It's the only way to overcome the skills shortage in UK manufacturing."

How will Rearo know it has arrived at its destination in two years? The financial metrics are clear: hitting the turnover and margin targets, and seeing worktop sales breach the £1million mark. But for Mercer, the qualitative measures are just as important.

"Success will be when our new commercial systems are specified as standard on major projects across the UK. It will be when we have solidified relationships with at least two more major national distributors. Internally, it will look like a more skilled workforce, with reduced turnover, operating in a modernised factory where our investments have alleviated the old bottlenecks."

One of the most critical, albeit less visible, milestones is the modernising and upgrading of the company's software, Mercer explains. "Futureproof-ing it is essential for the integration and data analy-sis we'll need to support our growth. It's a behind-the-scenes project, but it's absolutely fundamental."

Consolidating success, for Mercer, means not standing still. Profits will be reinvested into the next phase of capital investment, creating a "virtu-ous cycle of improvement."

The relationships with architects will be nurtured through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) seminars. Successful projects will become marketing case studies, solidifying the reputation. "Achieving the two-year targets isn't the end goal," he stresses. "It's about leveraging that position to ensure Rearo remains a resilient, family-owned busi-ness for the next 35 years."

The two-year plan is more than a document; it's a manifesto for change. The journey to redefine Rearo, to transform it from a Scottish retail favourite into a UK commercial powerhouse, is underway. And Graham Mercer, is firmly in the driver's seat.

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- Enhance employee retention by improving facilities (e.g., new canteens, gyms) and revising apprenticeship schemes to create a "great place to work."
- Measuring success and consolidation
- Measure success through financial targets, secured distributor contracts, operational efficiency gains, and a reduced employee turnover rate.
- Reinvest profits into the next phase of capital investment (e.g., panel sizing line) to ensure long-term growth and sustainability.
- Future-proof the business by updating software.

Rearo renews sponsorship with Neilston FC for second season

Rearo, the leading manufacturer and supplier of high-quality bathroom and kitchen surfaces, has announced the renewal of its sponsorship agreement with Neilston Football Club for the 2025/26 season.

It is the second consecutive year that the Govan-based company has served as stadium sponsors of the East Renfrewshire club, reinforcing the company's long-standing commitment to supporting grassroots football and local communities.

The renewed partnership will see Rearo's branding continue to feature prominently at the stadium, including the 'Rearo' signage positioned alongside the iconic Brig O'Lea name at the entrance to the ground.

The company will also maintain its trackside advertising presence, a relationship that has spanned nearly a decade. This season's sponsorship investment further cements Rearo's dedication to the club's growth and success, according to its managing director Graham Mercer.

Rearo's involvement with Neilston FC extends beyond financial support. Last season, the company donated premium Senses™ worktops for the club's newly constructed bar area, installed by committee member and local joiner Steven Galbraith. The bar has become a social hub for players, supporters and the community.

The club's recent renovations, including modernisation of home, away, and referees' changing facilities, also featured Rearo's Selkie® wall boarding – highlighting the company's ethos of craftsmanship, reliability, and community engagement, said Mercer.

He added: "We are proud to renew our sponsorship with Neilston FC for another season. Football clubs like Neilston are the heartbeat of their communities, and Rearo is committed to supporting initiatives that bring people together. Our relationship with the club goes beyond sponsorship – it's about collaboration, shared values, and investing in local talent. From supplying materials for the bar to seeing our branding at Brig O'Lea, it's been fantastic to play a part in the club's journey."

Mercer went on: "We look forward to another successful season and wish Andy and the team all the best on the pitch."

Andy Whiteford, Neilston FC's first team manager said everyone at the club shared his appreciation for Rearo's ongoing support.

He commented: "Rearo has been an outstanding partner to Neilston FC, and we're thrilled to have them back on board as our stadium sponsors.

"Their contributions – both financial and in-kind – have made a tangible difference to our facilities, improving the matchday experience for players and fans alike."

Whiteford added: "As a community-focused club, we value partners who share our passion for local engagement, and Rearo has been exemplary in that regard. We're grateful for their commitment and look forward to achieving more together this season."

Neilston FC, currently competing in the West of Scotland Football League First Division (tier seven of the Scottish FA pyramid), boasts a rich history dating back to 1897.

The club celebrated a triumphant 2024/25 campaign, securing promotion as champions of the Second Division.

Rearo's sponsorship aligns with its broader corporate social responsibility initiatives, which include supporting local sports teams, investing in staff development, and prioritising sustainable business practices.

As a second-generation family-run business with deep roots in Glasgow, Rearo takes pride in strengthening ties with the communities it serves.

Rearo secures £1m-a-year deal with Eurocell

Rearo has agreed a new deal with Eurocell, to supply laminate wall panels. The contract with the Derbyshire-based company, which has an extensive network of 200 branches across England, is worth around £1million-a-year.

Eurocell specialises in manufacturing and supplying windows and doors, and roofline products – including soffits, and facias – as well as decorative interior solutions, including PVC and laminate wall panelling.

It was previously supplied by International Decorative Surfaces (IDS), which entered administration last year, and the company had been seeking a new supplier to meet ongoing demand.

The contract builds on Rearo's growing reputation as a trusted partner for large merchant groups requiring nationwide distribution of bulky, high-quality products. Eurocell, which is headquartered in Alfreton, near Nottingham, has already coded Rearo's Tradeline Tradeline and Selkie products on its intranet system. It is exploring opportunities to add Stericlad – the Glasgow-based company's new range of hygienic wall coverings – as well as worktops from its new Senses range, and its Rapidfit toilet cubicles, to its portfolio in the near future. Graham Mercer, managing director of Rearo, said: "We are delighted to partner with Eurocell, a business that shares our commitment to quality and customer service.

"This contract is a testament to Rearo's ability to meet the complex logistical needs of major merchants, particularly in the wake of market disruptions like the IDS closure.

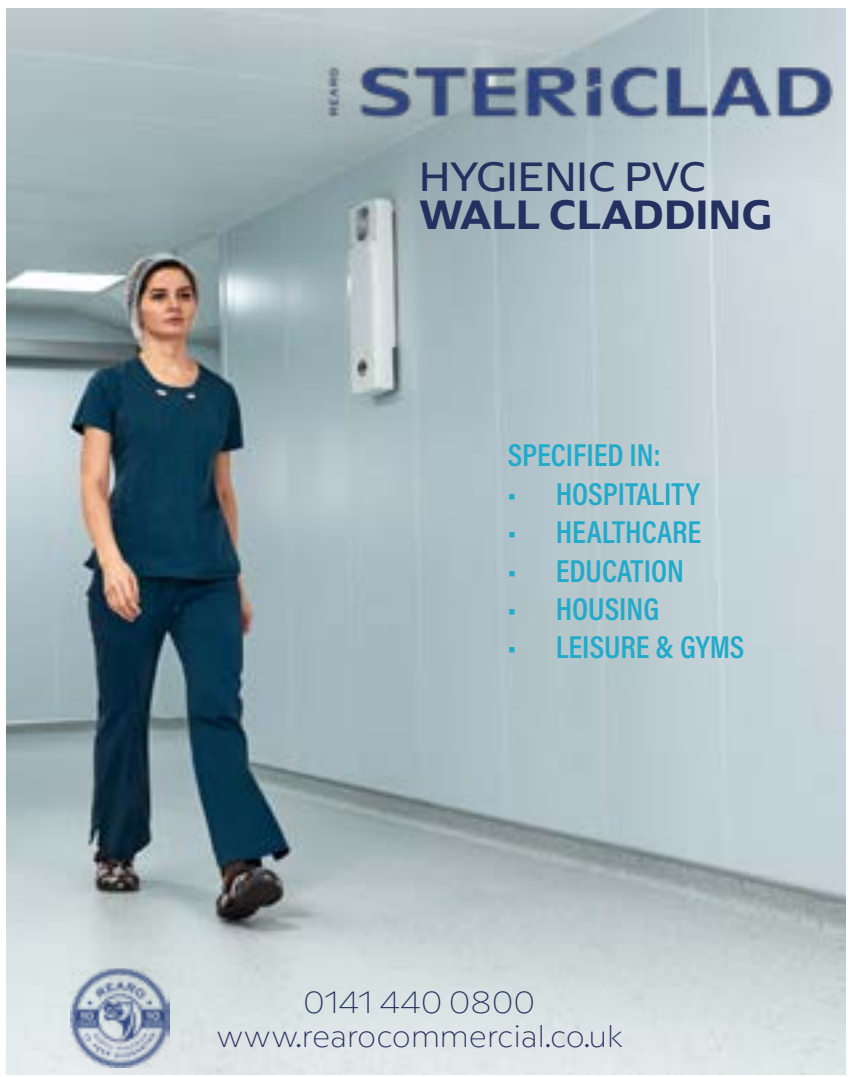
"Our investment in our delivery fleet, branch network, and IT systems ensures we can provide the reliability and efficiency that partners like Eurocell demand."

Sarah Caunt, category manager at Eurocell, said: "We are pleased to welcome Rearo as a key supplier.

"Their expertise in decorative surfaces, combined with their robust distribution capabilities, makes them an ideal partner as we expand our offering to customers. We look forward to a long and successful collaboration."

New Recruit

Robert McGough
Driver/Warehouse
Washington

Robert's previous roles have included working as a driver, prison escort officer and an offshore worker. A former resident of New Zealand, he has two cats and loves being outdoors, watching his children play football.

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