



Artex

# Caring Touches

Artex and Corporate  
Responsibility 2008

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# Who we are

Artex Ltd has been helping people put the finishing touches to their homes for more than 70 years, and we're very proud of that. Our famous finishes have provided beautiful backdrops to family occasions, domestic dramas and everyday life for millions of people, as well as making some not-so-pretty builders look pretty smooth!

Our first textured finishes were introduced in 1935 and by the 1980s, Artex was firmly established as a household name. Since then we've continued to go from strength to strength, concentrating on developing exciting new products and techniques to inspire DIYers and builders alike.

Today, Artex is part of Saint-Gobain, the world-leading manufacturer and supplier of construction products. No longer just a trusted brand in DIY and decorating, Artex has developed into a major distributor of building products, decorative finishes and specialist tools, with the widest product range available and a uniquely flexible delivery service.

Whether it's lending a helpful hand with the DIY or being a builder's best mate, Artex always gives the perfect finish.

# What we believe

We aim to be a unique and invaluable partner to the building and home improvement industry.

As such, we recognise the responsibility we hold towards the individuals and communities we work with, and the world around us. Making people happy and proud of their surroundings is what we do best, and we want to make sure that we continue to do that in every way possible, so we work hard to maximise our contribution to sustainable development through all that we do.

This is the first time we've publicly shared our thoughts, actions and aims on Corporate Social Responsibility. This review is a chance for us to tell you about our values, to outline our commitments, and hopefully to encourage everyone we work with to engage with us to make a difference too.

We have developed a number of fundamental shared principles, covering the areas of our business where we hold greatest responsibility and can make the biggest difference. These principles, shared by all our employees, guide what we do day-to-day, across our work.



# Our people

Great people make a great business, and we value each and every one of our 130 employees who make Artex what it is. We have a variety of ways in which we look after our people, help them get the best from their jobs and support them to develop, grow and learn.

## IN 2007 WE ACHIEVED:

- Zero 'lost time' accidents (ones that result in people not able to work the next day)
- Six years running with no 'lost time' accidents
- 50% reduction in medium and high level first aid incidents

## Health & Safety

The Health & Safety of everyone involved with Artex is our number one priority. Each Artex employee takes active personal responsibility to ensure that they, and the people around them, stay safe at work. Robust management systems and the development of a safety culture, upheld from within the workforce itself, put the well-being of employees, as well as contractors and visitors, at the heart of all we do.

Our Health & Safety record is held in high esteem: in 2007 Artex won the Saint Gobain Diamond award - the company's top Health & Safety honour - and we have been recognised as 'Best in Group' every year since 2002.

## IN 2008 WE AIM TO:

In 2008 we aim to work towards our goal of zero harm in the work place by:

1. Maintaining our zero 'lost time' accident record
2. Eliminating all medium and high level first aid incidents

Elspeth Watson  
National Account Manager  
Site: Field Based

*"It is extremely refreshing to work in an environment that is so Health & Safety Conscious, especially being in a position that requires a large amount of time on the road."*

- Elspeth Watson

## Listening

Every 15 months we carry out an employee survey so that every member of staff has the chance to express their views. Their feedback is very valuable; it helps us make Artex an even better place to work.

This year the results were more encouraging than ever, with employees across the business scoring well above the UK average on how they feel about their jobs, their commitment to the work place, the influence they have at work and their opportunities for career progression. In fact, Artex came in the top 25% of UK companies for job satisfaction – that's a lot of happy people!



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**Robert Towson**  
Speedtape Operative  
Ruddington

"The level of personal progression I have achieved due to proactive planning and development has been high."



**Peter Robinson**  
Senior Market Manager  
Ruddington

"So many employees benefit from the training and development offered and encouraged by Artex. Whether it's an NVQ or a professional qualification it all adds to a more skilled and knowledgeable workforce and company!"

## Training and development

We believe that it is the right of all employees to work in a safe and reasonable environment, to have the appropriate skills to perform their role, and to be encouraged to learn new skills to further their development.

Artex provides a comprehensive induction programme to ensure that everyone joining the team has the information and guidance they need to do their job effectively. Ongoing training, both on and off the job, is a part of every individual's employment development plan, including:

- Environment, health & safety
- Risk assessment
- Business systems
- Driving skills

We support our staff to gain professional qualifications and engage in further education. Our employees have become the proud recipients of NVQs in Performing Manufacturing Operations, Team Leading, Management, and Warehousing & Distribution, and are studying for MBAs and Marketing and HR qualifications.

We strive to make sure our training and development is targeted and of the highest quality, and the effort pays off. According to our annual staff survey, satisfaction with training amongst Artex staff is 20% above the industry average.

We don't just care about people working directly for Artex. We insist that our suppliers and sub-contractors share their employee rights and working conditions policies with us, to ensure that they are meeting legal requirements and best possible Health & Safety conditions, both within the UK and abroad.

# Our customers

We build strong relationships with our customers by listening to and delivering to meet their needs.

We do this throughout the organisation, ensuring that every employee spends time in our customer service centre and out on deliveries, so they have a first-hand understanding of what our customers want. We have a rigorous Customer Service Index (CSI) measure that tracks our performance across the following areas:

- Delivery on time and in full
- Product quality
- Damaged products
- Documentation accuracy
- Credit Notes

Our new warehouse product selection system uses innovative voice activated technology which has improved accuracy to 99.9% on mixed pallet orders, so our customers get exactly what they want. Due to the increased efficiency gains in picking, customers have seen an improvement in delivery time too!

Every 15 months we carry out a Customer Satisfaction Survey to check our performance as a supplier is up to scratch. The results drive our business agenda with our Senior Managers who are all involved in interpreting the results, agreeing the priority areas for improvement and designing initiatives to increase customer satisfaction. Our current improvement initiatives include:

- Product packaging and presentation
- Product availability and delivery
- Sales and marketing support



On a daily basis we encourage our customers to tell us what they think of our service through a new dedicated freephone feedback line:

0800 2987 209

This 24 hour every day service gives our customers the opportunity to air their views on our service, leave positive or negative feedback or offer suggestions for improvements.

*“After health and safety, looking after our customers and improving our customer service is our most important business priority.”*

# Our community

As a major employer in Ruddington and Newhaven, we recognise our role in those communities and the areas that surround them.

We engage in activity in our local communities in a variety of ways and encourage Artex staff to get involved, from supporting the local junior football team or decorating a community centre, to volunteering as lifeboat people.

## Ruddington Village Hall

We worked with Ruddington Village Hall to replace the entire ceiling. The new plasterboard was supplied by Artex and the ceilings were installed and decorated by Artex employees free of charge.



## Midlands Women's Aid

Midlands Women's Aid in Beeston, Nottingham is a charity that provides a safe haven for families that have suffered abuse. The centre provides a stable environment for women and children and ongoing emotional and practical support to families once they have left the refuge. Artex donates stationery to the charity and Artex employees annually put together Christmas gift boxes for resident children.



## Stamford Corn Exchange

Recently Artex has provided materials and advice in the renovation of the historic Corn Exchange Theatre in Stamford. The building, dating back to 1858, was last renovated in 1925, so was in desperate need of some TLC! It is being converted back to its former Victorian splendour with help from Artex employees.

# Our environment

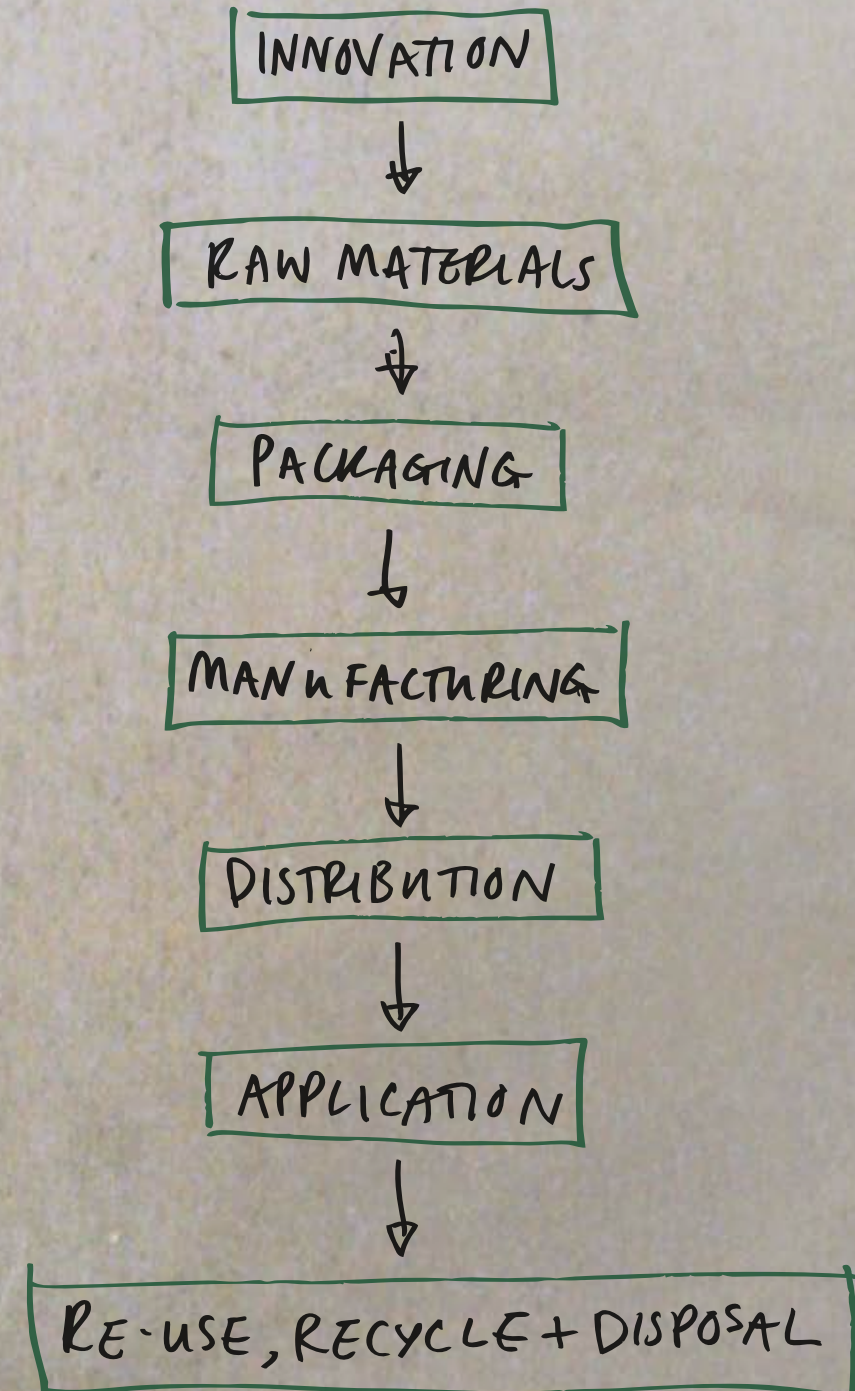
At Artex, we are committed to continual improvement in our environmental performance and have begun to carry out regular assessments to track this across every sector of our business.

We have a long history in enhancing and improving people's home and community environments, and we want to ensure that we continue to do so for the future. We look to reduce or prevent pollution to air, water and land wherever possible.

Alongside our shared principles, we also adopt the principle of Product Stewardship at Artex. This principle helps us to keep environmental protection at the forefront of our minds in production and new product development.

Product Stewardship is a way of assessing the environmental impact of a product along its entire lifecycle. Artex is proud to be an innovator in product development, to offer the widest product range, continuously developed to meet the changing needs of both professional trades people and DIYers alike. As a manufacturer and provider of some of the most renowned product brands in the home improvement sector, we know we have a responsibility to reduce the environmental impact of our products. We are continually assessing how we can better do this at every stage.

## PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP LIFE-CYCLE



It's all in  
the voice



Artex innovation isn't just about products, it's about ideas that shape our business and bring improvements across the board. Last year we introduced Voice Activated Picking in our warehouse. A high tech audio system means the warehouse pickers now receive orders through an ear piece. It's an innovative new system with a whole host of plus points:

- Health & Safety - hands-free picking means increased efficiency and improved safety, and the voice activation is also used for safety reminders on site.
- Environmental – no more order forms in the warehouse means we're saving on paper – we estimate we will save 5,000 sheets of paper a year.
- Accuracy and customer satisfaction; the new system doesn't allow the picker to move to the next item until the first one is on the pallet so we're now hitting accuracy rates of 99.9%!

## STAGE 1: Innovation

Artex excels in product innovation, leading the way amongst our competitors. We listen to our customers, observe the market and use our years of experience to pinpoint and develop new products that are 'first of their kind' in the construction and home improvement sectors. Alongside new products, we make ongoing improvements to our existing ranges - tried and tested products that have been firm favourites for many years in some cases.

“We want to use our purchasing power to change things for the better.”

A key focus for our innovation and product development is improving the environmental and Health & Safety impacts of our range. In this way, as well as providing the very best selection of tools and materials for contractors and DIYers alike, we can ensure that our product range uses the safest and most environmentally-friendly options available.

## STAGE 2: Raw Materials

We demand high standards from our suppliers. Not just in terms of providing us with the highest quality raw materials, but also in prioritising their commitment to the environment, sustainability and Health & Safety.

Working with our parent company, British Gypsum, we have carried out an audit of all our suppliers across different areas:

- Environmental and Health & Safety certification (ISO 14001 & OHSAS18001)
- Health & Safety performance
- Environmental performance
- Waste minimisation
- Sustainable purchasing policy

We will make the findings of our audit public to give recognition to those companies that are already performing well, and plan to work with others where necessary to help them improve. This audit will be an annual process from now on, helping us use our purchasing power as a leading player in the UK's construction industry to change things for the better.



### OUR AIMS

- Accreditation to ISO 14001
- Zero environmental incidents
- Implement fast-activating double doors in our Ruddington warehouse which will mean loading doors no longer have to be left open - keeping valuable heat in the warehouse, reducing energy consumption

We aim to source 100%  
of our wooden pallets  
from certified sustainable  
sources by 2010

## STAGE 3: Packaging

We are actively working with our suppliers and customers to minimise packaging, looking at alternatives across design, handling and distribution that will reduce waste, but still ensure our products arrive with customers in perfect condition. It's a win-win situation – less packaging means reduced costs and reduced impact on the environment.

Where we have to use packaging, we make sure it's recyclable, and made from sustainably sourced materials if possible. Many of our raw materials are delivered by tanker and now stored in 7 silos, (increased from just 3 silos) which means we can avoid using thousands of plastic sacks, saving approximately 120 tonnes of waste.

To make sure that we're working to reduce packaging from the outset, we're build packaging specifications into our New Product Development process this year.

With increasing customer demand for pallet deliveries, we are continually seeking new ways to ensure their sustainability. Currently the majority of the standard pallets we use are re-conditioned, and we are also trialling a collection service with customers to increase the number of pallets we re-use.



### OUR AIMS:

- Improve our packaging management system across the supply chain
- Set targets to reduce packaging and increase recycled content of packaging

## SCA Recycling

SCA is one of our major packaging suppliers. They have set up a recycling element to their business in order to manufacture recycled fibre for their products. They collect unwanted cardboard from businesses and process it to create new packaging. Their creative ideas and dedication to the environment has even seen them voted the second greenest company in the world!

## STAGE 4: Manufacturing

Not only do we try to protect the wider environment through sustainable sourcing, we make sure that our manufacturing processes don't cause any harm to the land and waterways around our sites. Interceptor tanks, rigorous cleaning and dust prevention systems, and regular internal and external checks all help to prevent pollution of the stream that runs round our Ruddington site and the land and community around us. A new system to separate surplus materials means we can now recycle 75% of manufacturing waste rather than send that to landfill.

We look to conserve energy and our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions where possible. The majority of our forklift trucks used in the plants and warehouses are powered by gas or electricity rather than conventional vehicle fuel, reducing emissions.

We've increased the insulation in the roof of our warehouse and plans are afoot for fast closing warehouse doors, to conserve heat and energy. We're testing out motion-detecting lighting in our meeting rooms, canteens and bathrooms and hope to be able to extend these to other areas to reduce unnecessary energy use.

## STAGE 5: Distribution

We pride ourselves on our outstanding multi-drop distribution service. But where transportation is involved, so are potentially harmful CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We are working with our haulage contractor, Hardstaffs, to reduce environmental impact wherever possible.

### OUR AMS

- 81% of Artex vehicles to be dual fuel powered by March 2009
- Hardstaff Exhaust System will meet Euro IV and Euro V emissions
- Introduce regular monitoring and evaluation of CO<sub>2</sub> outputs from haulage, to drive improvements

## STAGE 6: Application

In line with our belief in product stewardship, we don't just take responsibility for our products up to the point they are delivered to customers. We also provide some of the UK's best instructors, training facilities, and courses to teach the skills needed on site. As part of the high quality training that Artex provides in partnership with our sister company British Gypsum, we include recommendations on best environmental practice in the application and disposal of our products.

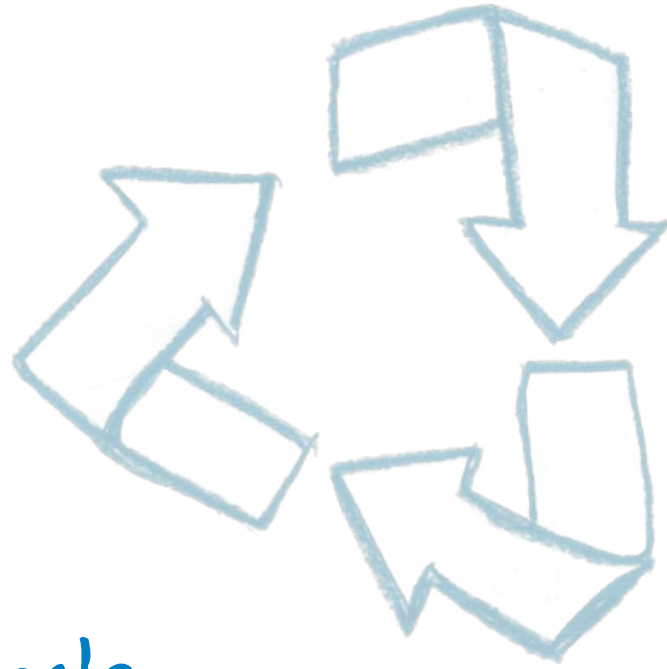
We are evaluating our environmental impact across our offices and marketing materials, using only recycled or FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified paper products from ISO 14001 accredited companies, and are introducing recycling facilities across our offices and canteens.



Hardstaffs are at the forefront of environmental innovation in their sector and are ISO 14001 accredited. They work closely with major truck, trailer and engine manufacturers and frequently trial new technology to improve environmental performance. Just over half of the Artex delivery fleet now operates on natural gas, which produces 28.5% less CO<sub>2</sub> per mile than regular diesel, or on dual fuel. This, coupled with Hardstaffs' electronic engines and information management systems, means that the fleet complies with stringent European emissions standards and we are looking to improve these still further. Draw bar vehicles were

introduced to the fleet recently, designed to carry extra large loads over long distances rather than using two standard vehicles.

High tech systems for route planning, load planning and navigation are key to maximise the use of vehicles and minimise impact on the environment – wherever possible Artex delivery vehicles will pick up from nearby suppliers on their return to save unnecessary 'empty' journeys.



## STAGE 7: Re-use, Recycle and Disposal

We have rigorous processes in place that ensure we always comply with the legal standards for disposing of waste and work to exceed them wherever possible. In 2007 we implemented an improved system of separating surplus materials, meaning we can now recycle 75% of our manufacturing waste, which meant we reduced our overall level of waste sent to landfill by 50%.

All packaging waste is recycled or re-used, with the exception of contaminated paper sacks which we currently have to send to landfill, but we're working on this too!



### OUR Aims

- Reduce waste to landfill by a further 50% by 2008
- Source a recycling company for the contaminated packaging that we are currently unable to recycle

What does  
the future hold?

# Artex Tomorrow...

We run a successful company, but we know there's always room for improvement! We aim to continuously assess and improve every aspect of the business, valuing open communication at all levels to support this. Let us know what you think about our review, by contacting us at:

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