

ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT



The threads of history are woven into the grain of FisherBullen, the builders and joiners that began life as two separate companies in the late 19th-century. In 2009, Fisher and Sons of Fakenham and H Bullen of Cromer were united and now combine over two centuries' worth of experience, expertise – and the standards that are their mutual heritage.

It is this heritage and these skills that have brought some stunning commissions to FisherBullen's door. From Norwich Cathedral to Binham Priory, from the gates of Felbrigg Hall to the glasshouse at Hoveton Hall, the signature craftsmanship of FisherBullen is quietly evident across the finest architecture in the county. "We do a lot of work with the National Trust and local estates," explains John Turkentine, general manager at FisherBullen. "We are traditional builders – but we also have the ability to work with modern materials and contemporary designs."

Two recent commissions nearing completion illustrate this point: in Norfolk, an architect-designed house constructed from glass, steel and zinc is a decisively 21st-century eyrie, with commanding views of the north Norfolk coast. Over the border in Suffolk, meanwhile, the wraps will soon be off a Queen Anne-style mansion, where every period detail has the full attention of carpenters and joiners; each of its 240 shutters, for example, has been individually

Heritage and skills for today

made to precise measurements.

"Every customer is different," says Peter Emerson, workshop manager at Bullen Joinery. "And every commission is different, but however modern – and however modest – traditional craftsmanship always has a place. There are some things that will always be in demand, not least quality."

A bespoke timber-framed hand-made kitchen for a new home, wooden double-glazed casement windows for another, an oak staircase for a castle – the joiners and carpenters are busy at Bullen Joinery's Cromer workshop. With a wide pool of highly-trained talent, Bullen Joinery is able to bring its clients' ideas to life.

"We can work from our customers' own designs and ideas, or we can point them in the direction of a design team," says Peter. As part of the RG Carter construction group, FisherBullen and Bullen Joinery can access the management resources and technical skills of a major building group whenever they are needed.

"We have excellent relationships with our clients, founded on respect: for the individual, their privacy and the environment," adds John.

Despite the turbulence in the construction industry as a result of the recent economic



Old and new: The skilled craftsmen in Fisher Bullen's Cromer workshop (above) and (left) Binham Priory and (below) St George's, Thornham.



convulsions, award-winning FisherBullen is looking ahead. Sustainability is part of the company's fabric and its commitment to the environment is unwavering.

And so is the firm's investment in its staff. A workforce of craftsmen is regularly enhanced by locally-recruited apprentices learning trades including joinery, carpentry, brickwork, plumbing and decorating. Bullen Joinery's workshop staff combine more than 275 years of experience with the firm – and a foreman who joined the company when he left school, 45 years ago.

"We're proud of our workforce, and the legacy we are creating with local jobs for local people," says John. "And while our heart and soul is in Norfolk, we have expertise that we can take across the country."

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