

# FENCING TIMES

*UK & Ireland*

*2023, Issue 5*



**Rockwool  
presents  
Noistop  
Essential**



# What are you doing it all for?

**W**henever we come across fencing installers who want to sell their business – usually because they want to retire and they have no children willing to take it over – we hear that they are finding it extremely difficult to find a buyer. In most cases, it turns into a clearance sale. The vehicles go to a Romanian export trader. The machinery and tools end up with another fencing installer in the area. If you're lucky, they'll also want to have the customer base but that almost always brings in less than expected, because all those addresses are also in Yellow Pages and the customers will automatically end up with fencing installers in the area anyway, if the current fencing installer ceases business. The only thing of real value is usually the buildings. If these have been paid off, they can be leased or sold and the fencing installer will have enough money for his retirement.

But in virtually every case, the business itself is lost. The business for which they worked all their lives and strained every muscle, the business for which sacrifice after sacrifice was accepted even though it deprived their own family of much time and attention – that business simply ceases to exist overnight. The sign is taken off the front, the name disappears from Yellow Pages, and that's that.

In itself that's not such a big deal if you're a fencing installer purely and simply because you really enjoy the job and love putting fences in the ground. In that case you've had an enjoyable profession all your life that you can look back on with pleasure during your retirement.


But if you put in long days all your life because you wanted to build a great business that would provide employment for decades to come and that would keep your name alive even after your death, then it's rather a shame. And if you did it because you hoped that one day it would generate enough money for a villa in Ibiza, with a fridge full of champagne and a swimming pool full of girls in bikinis (or sun-tanned pool boys, for the female fencing installers), then you're in for a nasty shock when suddenly it appears that no one wants your business.

If you don't have a successor to whom you can transfer the business little by little, then for selling your business you are dependent on other fencing installers or investors. If you want them to pay a fat price for your business, there are two incredibly important things that most fencers either fail to do or do too late.

The first one is that you need to ensure your trade name has value. This name can produce more than the buildings and the fixtures and fittings combined. A good name radiates confidence. Customers also prefer to buy their new car from the official dealer rather than at the bazaar. This is because it employs professionals and also because it has a big name at the front. This name reassures you that you'll get better service there than at the unbranded dealer on the street corner. And if you do pay over the odds, at the dealership it won't be by as much.

The same goes for fencing customers: the bigger your reputation in the region, the more they'll pay to buy a fence from you.



A tropical beach scene with a palm tree in the foreground, a blue ocean, and a clear sky. The palm tree is on the right side of the frame, with its fronds extending towards the top right. The ocean is a vibrant blue, and the sky is a clear, light blue. The beach is sandy and occupies the bottom half of the image.

But it can work the other way round too. If you aren't well-known and are just one out of many fencing installers in Yellow Pages, customers will look at the price only. If you're half a euro dearer, they'll go to someone else. Investors know that as well. The bigger your name, the more interesting is your business.

A pleasant side effect is that – even while the company is still yours – you earn more. And this gives you money to hire more salespeople and erectors, allowing you to keep growing and earn even more.

Establishing a reputation is often easier than you might think. You don't need the same brand awareness as Coca Cola to be of interest to investors. All you have to do is show that customers in your region think of your company when they need a fence. A lot of fencing installers have managed to get there, so it is possible. Even if you don't know much about marketing.

Fixing a nameplate to every fence you install is a first, easy and very effective method. Some fencing installers are hesitant to do this. They think the customer will think it ugly, or regard it as too boastful. But if you get over your diffidence and modesty and hang a nameplate on every fence, you will really benefit from this. Hang it on uprights every 25 metres and hang it on every corner and next to every gate. Make sure your name is big enough for it to be read from the street. You'll be amazed how quickly customers will say that they came to you because they saw a sign on a fence.



A second, relatively easy method is to sponsor the regional sports association. If it needs a fence, offer it one for the price of the materials, provided it lets you hang banners there. Or, if your cash flow allows, provide the fence completely free of charge in exchange for more and bigger banners. The more eye-catching the banners, the better.

The second point you need to have in place to be interesting to investors is more difficult: your company has to be able to operate without you. And then preferably operate in such a way that it continues to grow a bit year by year. In a lot of fencing companies, the owner is the driving force. He does all the important things himself and is constantly motivating his staff for all other tasks. That's a major pitfall as it means your business collapses if you're no longer there.

If you're (still) small – with one team out on the road and one employee in the office at most, it's almost impossible to make yourself redundant. Then the first priority is to grow bigger. But once you have three or four teams on the road, plus an extra salesman driving around and an extra buyer and planner in the office, then it's time to gradually shift more of your own work to them. You can then devote the free time it gives you to training and making your people more efficient, or looking for even more people to help.

Of course, this second point is easier said than done. And it can't be done in a week either. But it's something you will have to work on a bit every day between now and the date when you want to retire, assuming you want to sell your business for a decent price by then. Because if you wait until you're 65, it'll be too late.

Even if you already have a successor, the latter point still applies. Whether it's one of your own children or a loyal employee: start thinking in good time about how you'll transfer the business. Because that will involve all manner of things. From a legal perspective and more especially from a taxation perspective also. No matter what country your business is located in, the tax man is always at the head of the queue to cream off as much of the sale's proceeds as possible.

If you manage to get a good price for your business that allows you to retire to a Caribbean island, feel free to send us your new address: we'll send the Fencing Times on request to any country with postal services. ■








# Fencing Times

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Are you a fencing installer, but don't receive the Fencing Times? Call or email us and we'll put it right. You can also call or email us to sign up for a digital subscription; we'll be happy to add you to our mailing list.

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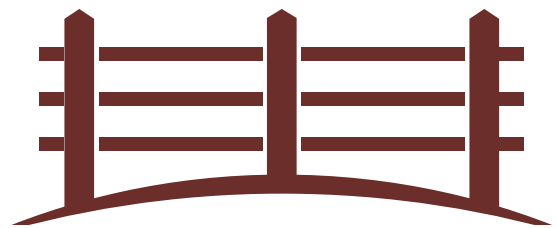
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1) In Belgium, Germany, France, the UK, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland.





## IN THIS FENCING TIMES:

### The Publisher:

What are you doing it all for? ..... 2

### From our readers:

Fence Post ..... 9

Foto of the month ..... 12

Livia's fence photos ..... 26

### From guest writers:

Richard about gate safety ..... 28

Raijmond abot perimeter protection ..... 32

### News from suppliers:

Rockwool: lightweight version of Noistop sound barrier ..... 14

New light column from Key Automation ..... 20

### And also:

Fences in the News ..... 41



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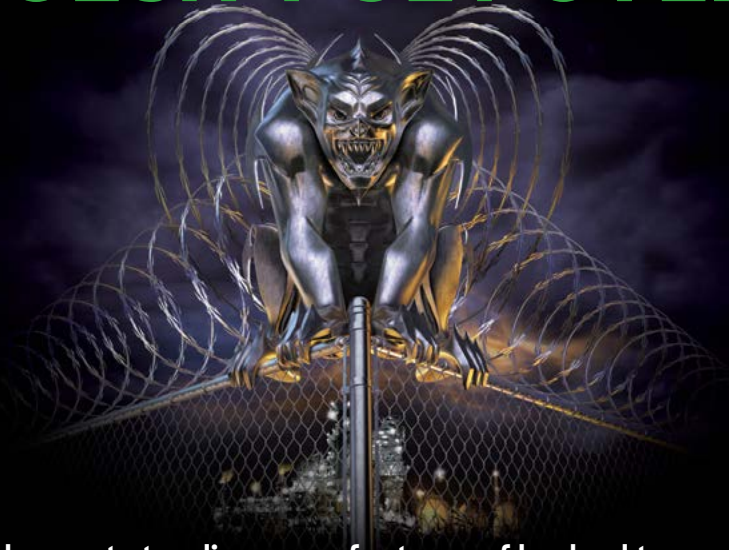
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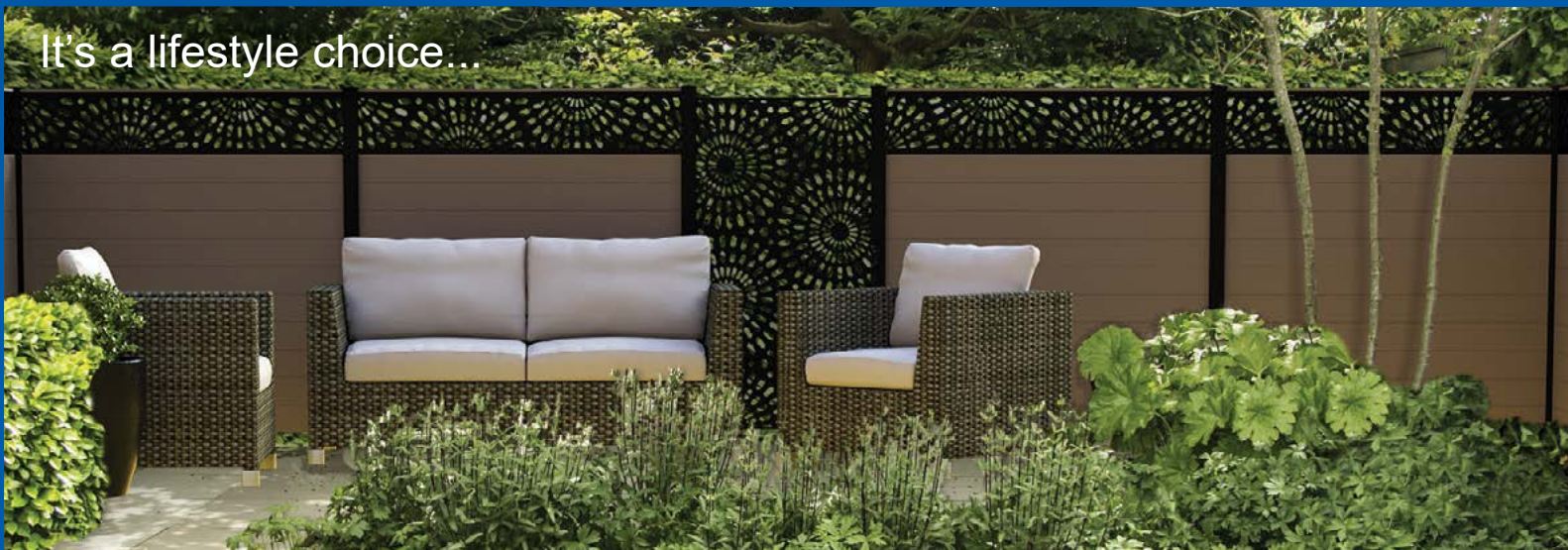
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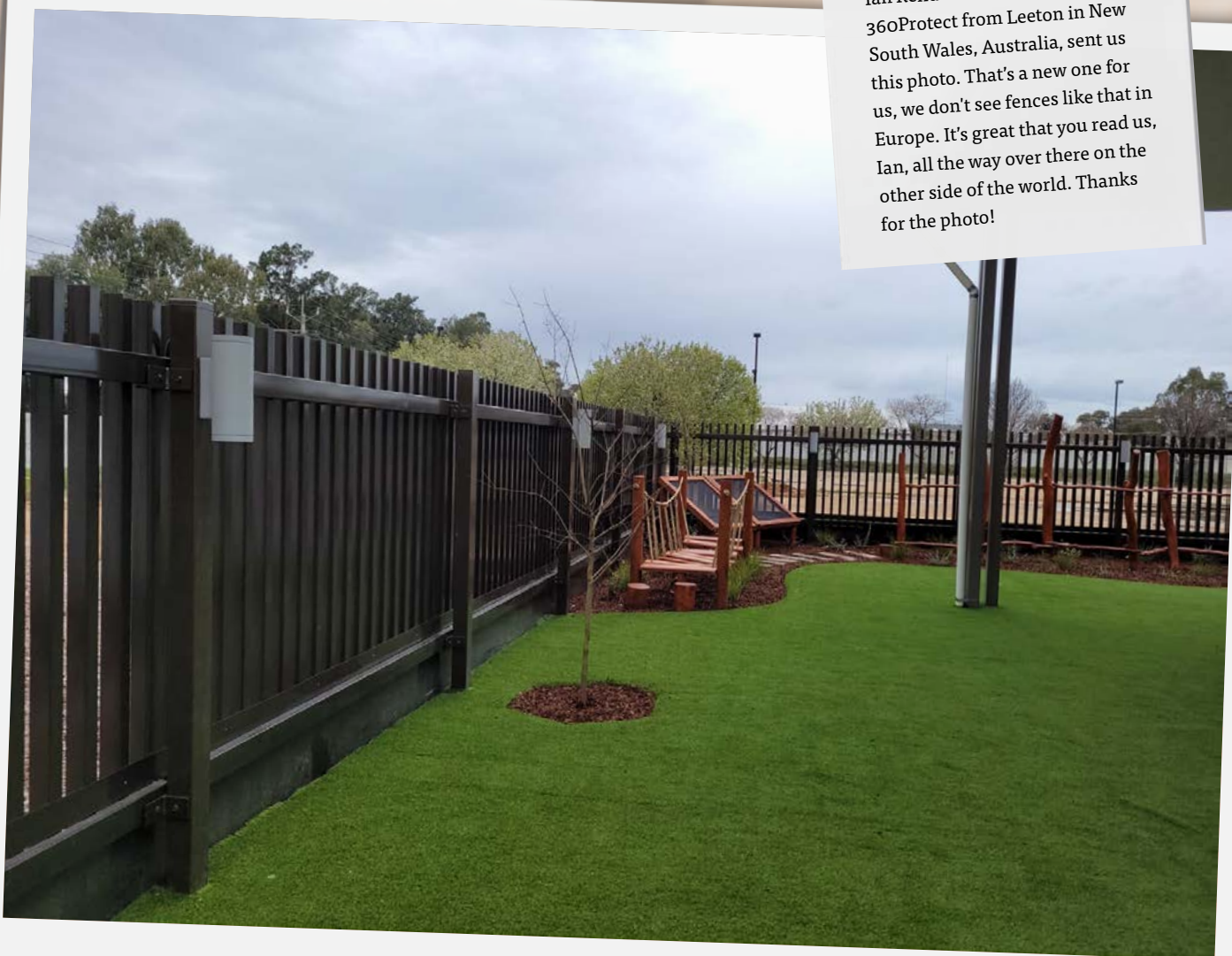
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# FENCE POST

## *Ian @ 360Protect*

Ian Rendell of fencing company 360Protect from Leeton in New South Wales, Australia, sent us this photo. That's a new one for us, we don't see fences like that in Europe. It's great that you read us, Ian, all the way over there on the other side of the world. Thanks for the photo!







### *Christel @ Arfman*

Christel ten Berge of fencing company Arfman in Holten, the Netherlands, came across this cute little fence. Old-fashioned decorative curls, modern clean lines and a laser-cut cow as well, all in a panel that's less than a metre long. Great find Christel, thanks for sending it in!



### *Eric @ Highland*

Eric Nijpels of agricultural fencing company Highland Stall & Weide, from Sottrum near Bremen in Germany, loves flowers and came across a twin wire panel in bloom. "Beauty can't be constrained," he writes. Thanks for your photo, Eric!



*Samuel @ AOS*

Samuel Adolph of AOS came across this funny little gate in Port d'Andratx, on the Spanish island of Majorca. Thanks Samuel!







CHITRA  
A





## *Curved ball-stop fence*

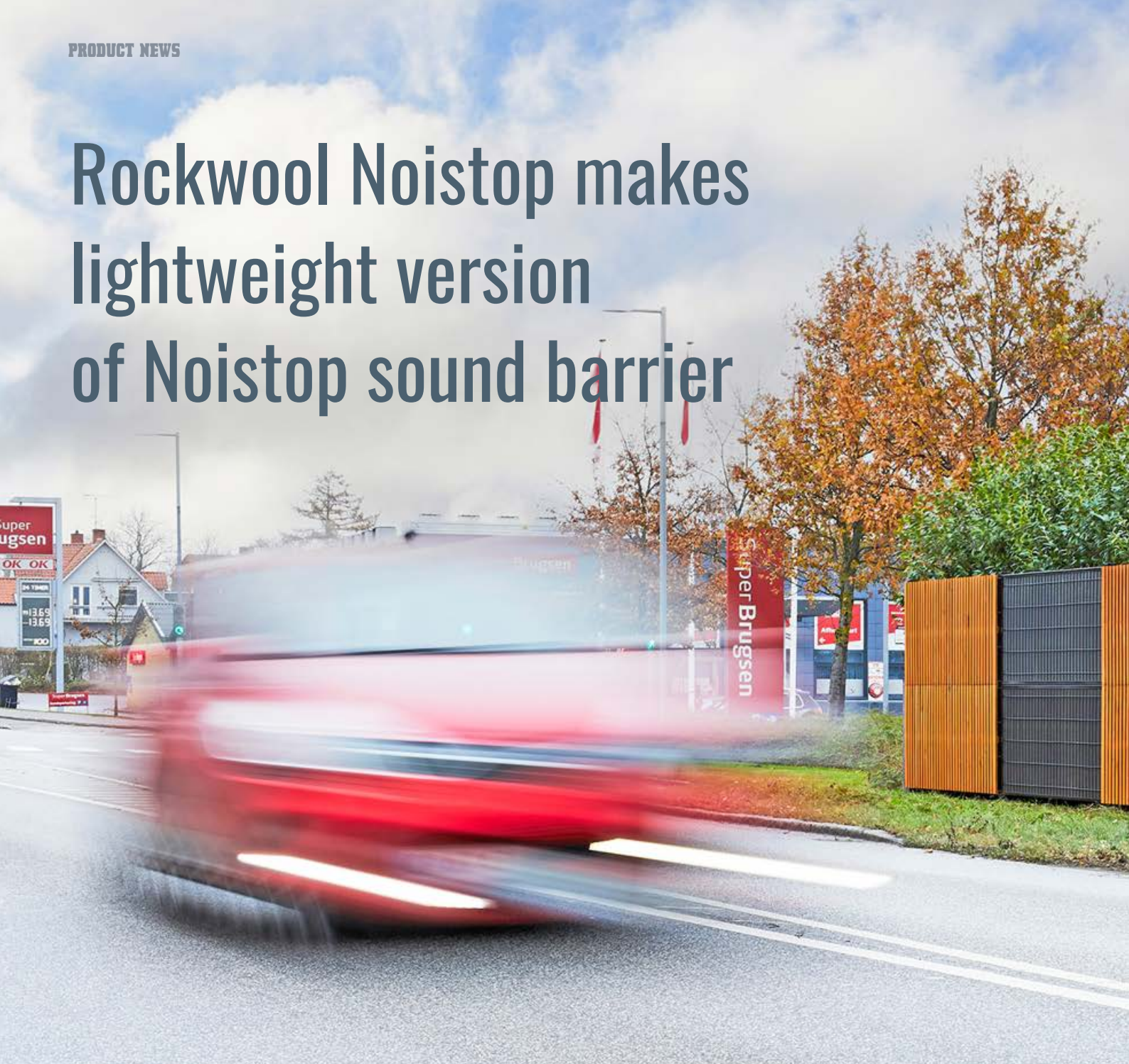
This photo comes from Sybille Bach of Zaunbau Bach in Schorfheide, near Berlin. The posts of this ball-stop fence are a bit crooked, but that was a deliberate choice. Beautiful job, Sybille! The Locinox construction radio is heading your way.

## *Send us your photos!*

Would you like to share a great photo with your colleagues in the industry? Scroll through the photos on your phone and send the most beautiful and fun ones to [fencepost@fencingtimes.com](mailto:fencepost@fencingtimes.com). Send as many as you like, we can never get enough! The reader who submits the best photo of the month will win a Locinox construction radio.



# Rockwool Noistop makes lightweight version of Noistop sound barrier



Danish multinational Rockwool launched a lightweight version of its Noistop sound barrier fencing this season. The new fence is called Noistop Essential and is a combination of the existing products Noistop Steel and Noistop Wood.

**“T**here was market demand for a lighter version of the existing Noistop modules,” business manager Barbara Anstötz says. “A fence with acoustic properties that’s able to compete with other types of fencing like plug-in fencing or other acoustic fences. That’s why we developed a third Noistop sound barrier.”

## MIX AND MATCH

Noistop Essential is a single system. “Just like Noistop Steel modules, the basis of the fence are steel frames filled with Rockwool stone wool,” Anstötz says. “The steel grid has a rectangular mesh, so they’re better matching the popular mesh panel fences. Additionally you can choose to add-on cladding made of wooden slats onto the frames – along the entire fence length, if the customer wants a fence with a completely wooden exterior, but you can also clad just single sections or modules with wood.

We call it ‘mix and match’; you can create many sorts of variations and give the fence a very playful look. Without any cladding, the customer has a maintenance-free steel fence, which they can either leave as it is or grow climbing plants on. The possibilities are endless.”





ROCKWOOL



## APPLICATIONS

Noistop Essential was developed mainly for the residential market. "Since Covid, house owners have been spending more time around their property," Anstötz says. "As a result they also inconvenience and annoy each other more, especially in the garden. This created a need for a slim fence to be placed between gardens and not necessarily towards the road. With Noistop Essential, they have a sound barrier that absorbs a lot of noise while also being adaptable to suit their personal taste. The new fence comes into its own anywhere that space is limited, for example on private gardens, in or around hotels, on apartment complexes roofs, or around restaurant terraces, schools and day care centres. We've already used them to surround quite a few padel<sup>1</sup> courts. And finally, Noistop Essential is also ideal for making sure the neighbours don't have any issues with your heat pump. The University of Salford in Manchester recently carried out extensive testing in the UK with our dedicated distributor IKoustic and found Noistop Essential extremely suitable for this."

1) Padel is a trendy but noisy cross between tennis and squash

## STONE WOOL

Noistop Essential has a core made from a new, high-absorbing and there with efficient stone wool. "That's the advantage of being part of a major company," Anstötz says. "The Rockwool Group continuously improves in both our production facilities of stone wool as well as developing products that contribute to many of the society's biggest challenges, like noise pollution. For Noistop Essential we use the latest stone wool made for outdoor use; it has an unprecedented density of 190 kilograms per cubic metre. This means that we can halve the thickness of the elements, while still achieving almost the same noise reduction values as Noistop Steel og Noistop Wood." The new acoustic fence blocks 18 decibels of noise and absorbs 9 decibels. "We tested our products at TÜV in Essen, Germany, a certified institute for acoustic testing. With those figures Noistop Essential meets the requirements of Class B2 of EN 1793-2 for insulation and Class A3 of EN 1793-1 for absorption."





## SPECIFICATIONS

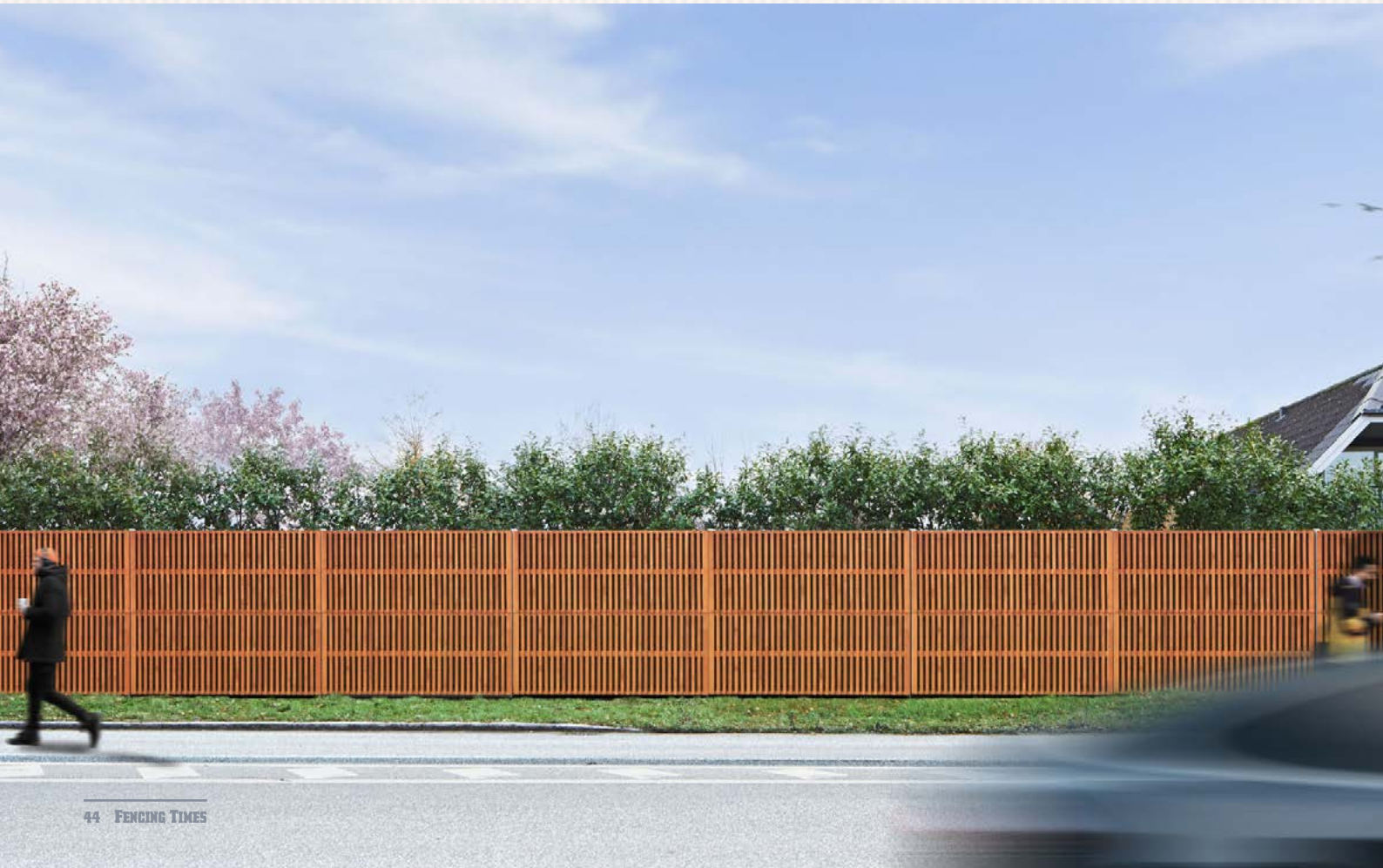
Noistop Essential modules are 60 millimetres wide, with a mesh panel on each side. Against the mesh panel, there is a polyethylene net stretched on the inside. This protects the stone wool, while still allowing sound to pass through to be absorbed by the stone wool. The frame is hot-dip galvanised and can be powder-coated as required – the standard options are anthracite grey and jet black. The panels are 2400, 1800, 1200 or 600 millimetres long and 500, 900 or 1000 millimetres high. *“We selected the dimensions so that on one hand no stone wool is wasted, but on the other we’re still able to offer the customer an enormous amount of flexibility.”* For those who need a different panel length, there are special adjustment kits available that enable you to shorten a panel to the required length. The frames are installed between posts of 80 by 80 millimetres, with various thicknesses depending on the height of the fence. They are available with and without a base plate. To complete the range, Rockwool also supplies pedestrian gates in the Essential style. These are 1 metre wide and 1.80 or 2 metres high. *“All in all Noistop Essential provides materials for beautiful acoustic fences in heights up to 3 metres.”*





## CLADDING

The wooden cladding is made of impregnated natural or brown pine wood. The frames match either the flange side or the module backside and fit together nicely. Rockwool has developed a new fixation kit to mount the wooden cladding on the fence. "It makes installation very easy," Anstötz says. "The hanger keeps the cladding in place, so you can level it without needing to hold the panel there. Once that's done, you can attach the panel with a couple of screws in predrilled holes. If, after a few years, the customer wants to stain, paint, or completely replace the panel, they can unscrew it again just as easily." According to Rockwool, the cladding has a typical lifespan of 10 to 15 years, depending on weather conditions and whether the wood is maintained regularly. "A little tip at the end," says Anstötz: "Using the wooden cladding for the encapsulation of garbage bins or storage places in the garden, ensures a homogen appearance together with the noise fence." ■





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Image: Bi-folding speed gate Quattro 8 x 2,25 m

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# New light column from Key Automation

Italian drive manufacturer Key Automation, from San Donà di Piave just outside Venice, launched a new light column this winter: the EGO Column. It can be used as a standalone garden light, but also serves as a support post for photocells, a key switch, or keypads.

**“T**he EGO Column elaborates on our idea, which envisions gate automation and outdoor lighting as a single overall concept,” managing director and owner Nicola Michelin says. “The support posts that you need to place in the garden for photocells or switches, and the gate motors, are there doing nothing 99 percent of the time, so why not use them as a source of lighting during nighttime independently of the gate’s opening or keyboard usage?”

## EGO

The new EGO Column is part of the EGO range, which also includes a keypad and a key switch. These devices are both available in standalone format, but can also be integrated into the column. “We’ve got a special clip for that,” Michelin says. “All you need to do is unscrew the unit’s backplate, and then you install the clip in its place. Then you use the clip to click the entire unit onto a rail in the aluminium profile on the column. The depth of the profile is exactly the same as the height of the switches, so the units are flush mounted and sit beautifully against the profile’s cover plate. This produces a really attractive result for the keypad in particular, as its front is completely smooth. All you see is a smooth surface, until you touch the screen.”











### KEYPAD

The keypad and key switch in the EGO range are existing products, which until now were able to be used as surface-mounted switches. *“But we designed the range in its entirety from the start,”* Michelin says. *“We started back in 2018. The keypad in particular posed a technical challenge, as we wanted to create something completely different from the existing keypads on the market, by equipping the keypad with a touch panel with no buttons. It meant that we could make the surface completely smooth. But touch is really difficult outdoors, as obviously you can’t have the buttons responding to rain or wind, but they do need to react to the user’s fingers.”* The keypad has RGB backlighting; the customer can choose their preferred backlight colour. It comes in two versions: wired and wireless.

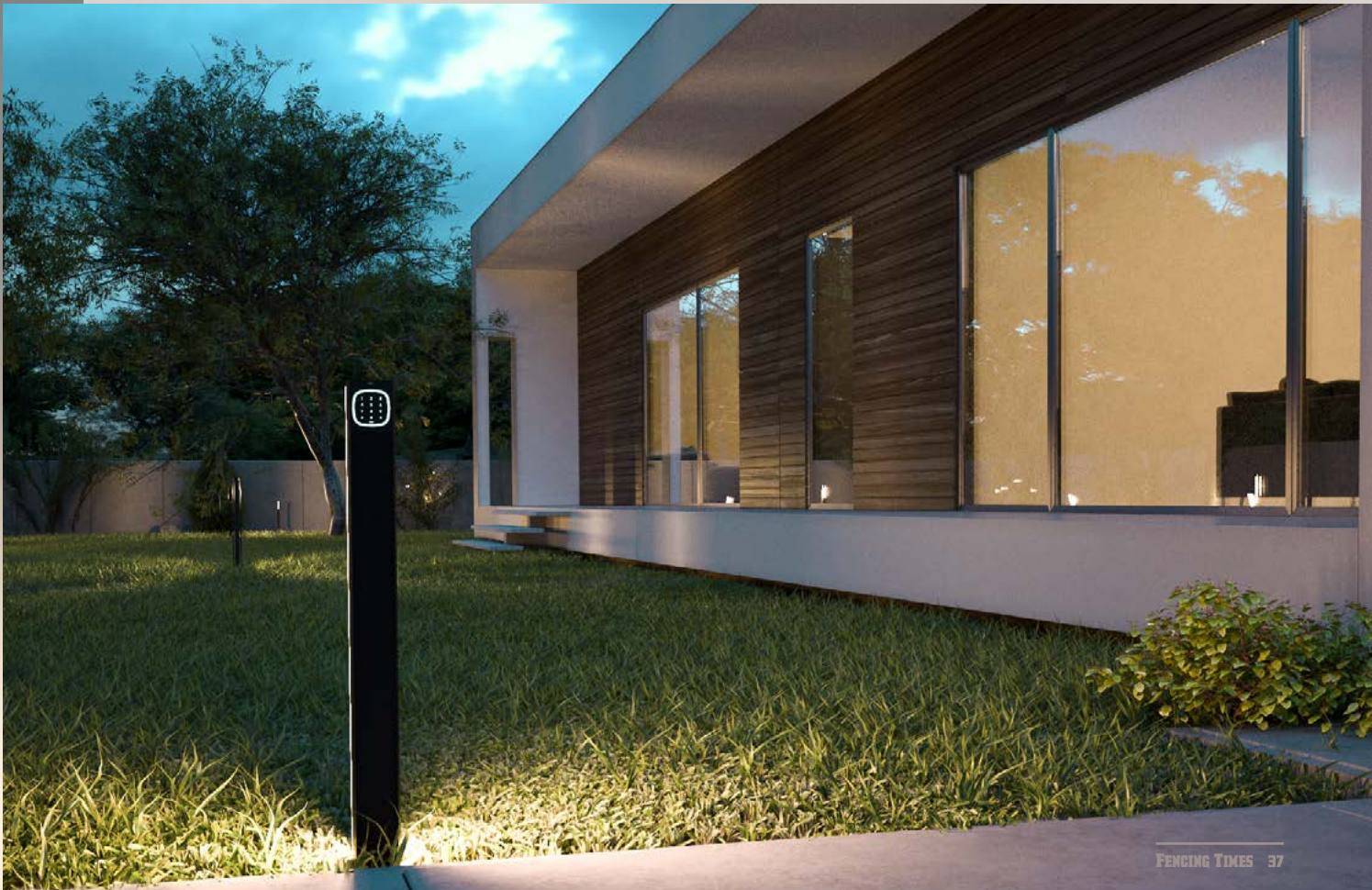
### PHOTOCELLS

In addition to the switches, the new EGO Column can also incorporate the photocells from the Key Automation range. These, too, click onto the rail in the profile, but unlike the switches, they are installed behind the cover plate rather than integrated into it. *“We made the cover plate from black plastic, but it’s translucent,”* Michelin explains. *“The infrared light from the photocells passes through it, while the photocell itself cannot be seen at all. If you didn’t know any better you’d think it was just a garden light.”*





Nicola Michelin





## NIGHT LIGHT SYSTEM

In addition to the recess on the front side for accessories, the EGO Column has recesses on both sides for LED strips. These have white plastic cover plates. *“Our entire range is based on the idea that gate drives and garden lighting go hand in hand,”* Michelin says. *“If you come home in the dark, you don’t just want the gate and the garage door to open for you, but you want your garden lights to switch on too – or already be switched on. From a technical point of view it makes sense to combine the two as well. You need to bring all sorts of electronics outdoors for the drives anyway. So what could be better than to offer the two applications in a single system? You can use the drive’s transformer to power the lighting, and use the controls to programme when the lighting turns on and off. It’s an ideal combination.”*

## SPECIFICATIONS

The new EGO light column is made from a black-coated, extruded aluminium profile measuring 100 by 50 millimetres, and is available in two heights: 500 and 1000 millimetres. Each is available either with or without LED lighting, and they can also be used solely as support posts for accessories. *“The other way around is obviously an option too,”* says Michelin. *“They can also be sold just as a garden light. It’s a particularly good option if the customer only wants to have lights of the same model in their garden. Then you install a column with a touchpad outside, two columns with photocells inside, and then further along the driveway you have columns with lighting only. It produces a stunning end result.”* The EGO Column is supplied with a galvanised steel base plate, which can be fixed to the surface of the driveway or on a small foundation. ■





# According to a survey of 100 installers:

**84%** reported unsafe design to be the most common cause for automated gate accidents in the last 10 years

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**I**n addition to being a fencing installer, Livia Graf is a photographer. Whenever her guys finish off a project, she drives to it and takes stunning fencing photos. This is one of them.







# Safety considerations for sliding gates

## Part 2

**I**n the previous column, as part of our *Gate Safety by Design series*, we focused on the importance of end stops to prevent a sliding gate from over travelling. To reiterate: risk assessment is key to stop gates over travelling and design and construction of the gate is the first place to start. Eliminating the safety and construction risks from the gate design in the first instance will make for an inherently safer system that will also require less additional or safety features fitted on the gate when it is finally commissioned.

Since falling gates have represented such a high proportion of accidents in the last 10 years, we wanted to provide further detailed practical guidance to help installers adopt the best safety protocol to avoid any further incidents.

### GATE SUPPORT POSTS

Ideally the gate should be supported between two goal post type supports or at least two hanging or suspension posts. This style of design will prevent the gate falling flat due to one component such as the roller breaking and causing a serious injury to anyone near the gate.

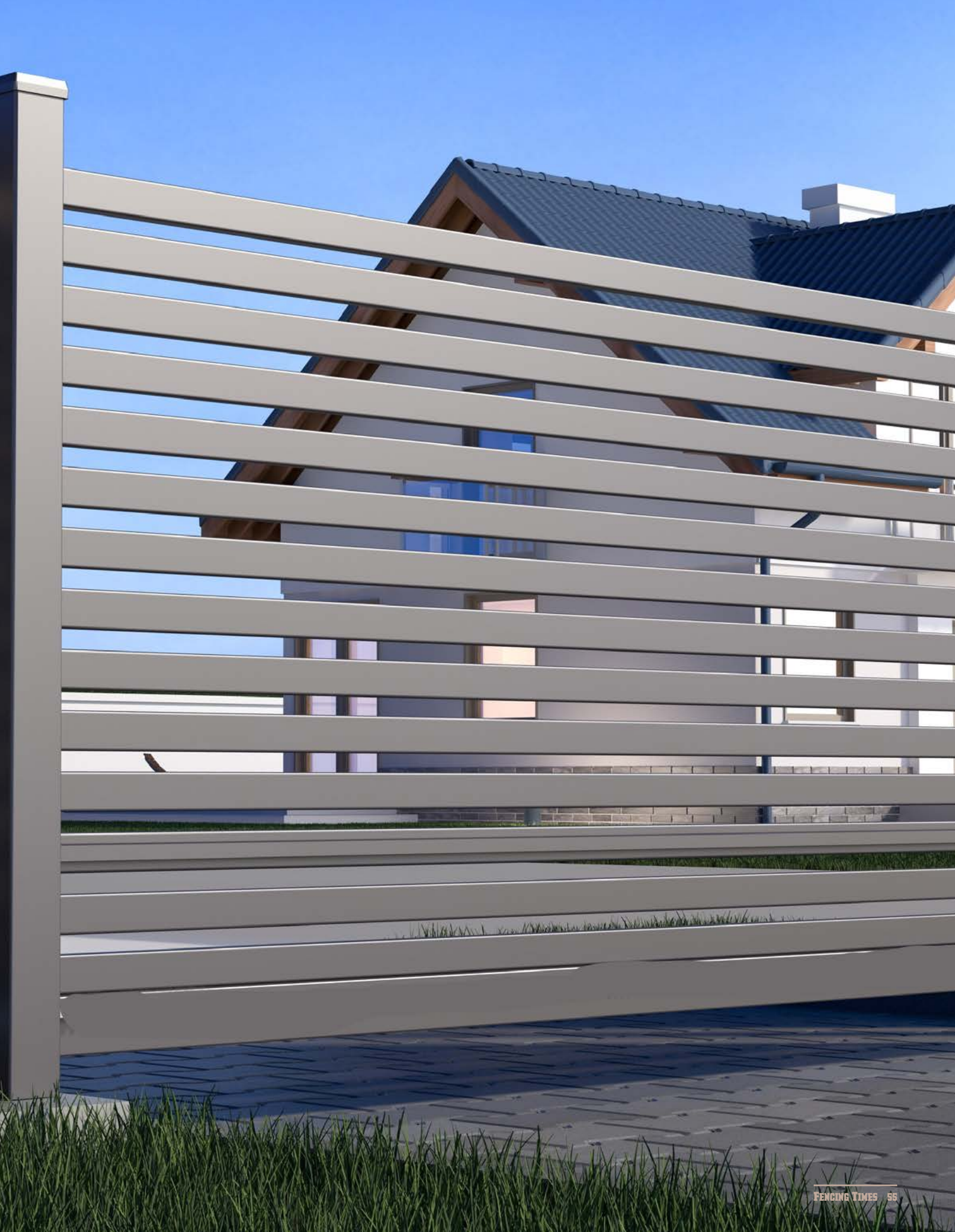
## *Richard Jackson*

For many years, Richard Jackson was responsible for running English fencing business H.S. Jackson & Son. Based in Ashford, Kent, it's one of the largest fencing companies in the UK. In 2010, after separate gate accidents took the lives of two children in quick succession, Richard founded Gate Safe, a charity dedicated to increasing gate safety. In 2012 he handed the reins of Jacksons Fencing to his brother Peter, freeing himself to focus entirely on Gate Safe.

richard@gate-safe.org









## CORRECT FITTING OF ACTUATORS

Limit switches and their associated actuators or flags are probably the most common way that sliding gates are given their fully open and closed positions. These rely on the flags being positioned in the correct place, but importantly they must be secure to prevent them falling off because of vibration or physical contact.

We would recommend not only relying on the grub screw biting into the racking, but to fit an extra Tek screw or similar to deliver a much more solid and secure fixing that will guarantee that the flag cannot become detached from the gate. If the flag does detach, the limit switch will not be activated and the gate will over travel and will then be totally reliant on a strong physical stop.

## PHYSICAL STOPS

It is essential that the physical stop in both opening and closing direction is capable of doing the job properly. If using the end plates on sliders that have internal rollers or wheels in the running tube, do not use screws to hold the end covers in place as

these can easily be broken if the gate is running at full power. Instead, weld the end plates to ensure maximum strength and security. Make sure that channels that have support rollers running in them have strong end caps that are also welded in place. Consider if there is any possibility that the gate rollers could over or under ride the end stops, and then take the relevant steps to mitigate this – by fitting larger rollers. Ensure the roller fills the entire space within the channel and that there are sufficient end stops within the design to prevent the roller passing beyond its intended open or closed position. Ideally the roller should fill enough of the channel to prevent movement.

After determining the desired travel distance, fit the racking so it stops just after the limit switch would activate. This way if the limit switch fails, the gate would lose drive beyond this point and therefore would be rendered incapable of any over travel while the motor was running. 'No rack, No drive'. Of course, this would have no effect if the gate was in manual release, so it is not a substitute for strong physical end stops. ■







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*Raijmond Rondeel*

Raijmond Rondeel has worked in perimeter security for many years. For Fencing Times, he writes about securing outdoor areas with detection systems. Do you have questions? Or a practical example - and are curious what Raijmond would have offered here? Send him an email at [raijmond@fencingtimes.com](mailto:raijmond@fencingtimes.com)





**R**aijmond Rondeel worked in perimeter security for many years. In a series of columns, he has explained different methods of perimeter security with detection systems, each of which has its own advantages and disadvantages. But in practical terms how do you deploy all these systems? When do you propose which system? The only answer is that there is no standard answer. For certain, perimeter detection is always made to measure and never 'off the peg'. To provide you with more insight into this area, this is a series of example projects. Raijmond will take you step-by-step through all the considerations and aspects that are involved in a perimeter detection project.

This time the column is about solar panel farms. Solar panel farms are fields, usually on farming land, filled with photovoltaic systems. Solar panel farms form a completely different category. They cover large distances in remote locations and the main reason for the fence is the insurance requirement. The issue here is not about preventing dangerous criminals from breaking out of prison nor to stop wives or daughters being kidnapped, the 'only' thing it has to ensure is that the solar panels are not stolen. Given the large distances and relatively low danger, you'll probably guess that it should not cost much. But a fence on its own is often simply not enough though. Some form of detection should still be present, especially if the parks are a long way away from populated areas and intruders have lots of time to cut open or dismantle the fence.

In the past, I have secured many solar parks using a fence detection system – a system where the detection takes place at the fence. In many cases, I made use of a cable system, using microphone cables, for example. This highly sensitive sensor cable is capable of detecting any physical attack on the fence – such as climbing, cutting, sawing and grinding – and doing so in a relatively economical way. The central equipment can monitor up to 600 metres (2 zones of 300 metres) of sensor cable, making the cost per running metre affordable, even for a solar farm owner.

### **STURDY**

But there is one prerequisite though. The fence has to be in a proper, stable condition, and it has to remain so. It also has to be kept free from vegetation. Site maintenance is actually very important in all forms of outdoor security and especially so for a fence detection system. The more stable the fence is, the better the so-called signal-to-noise ratio, and the more reliable the alarms. Chain-link mesh fencing should be checked and re-tensioned if necessary at regular intervals. And whatever type of fencing is used, it must be kept free of weeds regularly. Loosely hanging mesh or large amounts of weeds can move in the wind, giving rise to many false alarms. If that happens, the system will get switched off to avoid the irritation. Or you'll get an indignant phone call telling you that the detection system is no longer operating properly and would you care to come and have a quick look and recalibrate it, free of charge of course. In virtually every case, having dropped everything I was working on to rush round to the angry customer, I went on only to find a jungle of weeds on the fencing line.



## MAINTENANCE

Hopefully you realise by now that this won't require a security technician, but rather a gardener with a brush cutter and a pair of garden shears. If necessary, the fencing erectors should also stop by again and re-tension the mesh. As a security technician, there is not really much you can do here. You can tune down the sensitivity to the point where there are no false alarms, but the more you do this, the more likely it becomes that an actual intruder won't be detected either. With the microphone cable system mentioned earlier, there is then an additional disadvantage all at once. The sensitivity of the system is controlled on a per alarm zone basis. So in this example that would be the entire length of the 300-metre-long sensor cable. Even if the vegetation by the fence is only present for 100 metres of this zone, for example. The entire 300 metres then becomes less sensitive. What started off cheap has now become expensive.

## POINT SENSORS

That's why, after a number of such experiences, I began to use point-sensor technology more and more often. This involves screwing a sensor box onto the fence every 5 metres. This box is capable of detecting any physical attack on the fence, such as climbing, grinding, cutting, drilling, snipping and tilting, and it has a detection range of 5 metres, left, right, under and above the sensor. A single sensor can thus monitor five metres of fence, covering all sides. If you hang one of these sensors at a height of 1 metre, it can secure a fence 6 metres in height. This is a huge advantage, especially on any project involving very high fences, such as prisons. But there is yet another big advantage. The sensitivity can be calibrated individually for each sensor. This is very useful in the example where weeds and bushes only intrude on part of the fencing line. You can adjust the sensitivity of the relevant sensors. The higher sensitivity can then be maintained for the rest of the fence.









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*'The detection system doesn't work properly.' – 'Oh, really? How strange...'*

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## MAINTENANCE

Of course, you then have to impress upon the fence's owner that they let you come back again once the vegetation has been cut away, so that you can put the sensitivity of that part back to a higher level. You can also readily show him the difference now. Hit the fence or climb onto it to demonstrate how sensitive it is. First at the places where there is no vegetation and repeat it at the places where you have tuned down the sensitivity. This is more effective than a thousand words. Now it's up to the owner to ensure a stable fence free from vegetation. You've done your best. What if he still doesn't maintain the fence? Well, in that case it's at his own risk. And perhaps he would have been better off not having a detection system at all.

## SKIMPING

As I'm writing and thinking it over – and with the benefit of experience selling fences myself – it might also be an advantage in that the cost of point-sensor technology per linear metre of fencing is a bit higher than it is with the sensor cable system. This automatically deters owners who have little or no desire to invest in a decent fence as a shield, or in its security and maintenance. Because let's be honest about it: a chain-link fence is no protection, right? With a decent pair of wire cutters, an intruder can be inside in half a minute. Although he'll then be detected by the sensor cable. If as the owner you already think you should economise on the fence, then you'll also refuse to pay out money on the electronic side of things, and subsequently, the maintenance of that fence is also bound to stay on the back burner as well. By offering a slightly more expensive detection system as standard, you automatically sort the wheat from the chaff and also avoid misery later due to poor maintenance.







## INSTALLATION

I've therefore had good experiences with a point-sensor detection system. The sensors in this type of system are really easy to install with a kind of mounting plate, which as previously mentioned is fitted to the fence at 5-metre intervals. The cable that provides both power supply and communication is actually a kind of network cable that only fits one way. This runs from sensor to sensor. It's idiot-proof and impossible to get wrong. There is even a wireless system on the market that can monitor 2000 metres of fence. The sensors of that system contain a battery that lasts for 8 years and the central unit with receiver can be positioned 125 metres from the fence. No fiddling with cables, connectors and power supply. This is particularly good for beginners wanting to experiment with detection in addition to fence construction.

Point sensors have yet further advantages. We saw above the sensitivity can be calibrated on a per-sensor basis. This is easy with poorly maintained fences, but also easy when a fence consists of multiple fencing types. Such as chain-link and rigid mesh panels interspersed, or if the fence has several gates. Gates are often a bit less stable and they can rattle or move in strong winds. The sensitivity can be adjusted in that case too. As they are fitted on a mounting plate, point sensors are also well suited to bar fences or railings. This contrasts with cable sensor systems, which can only be mounted to the lower or upper beam, resulting in a fence that is not equally sensitive over its entire height. So you may be able to easily get over or under it undetected. There is no danger of that happening with point sensors. You can indeed use them for all fencing types.

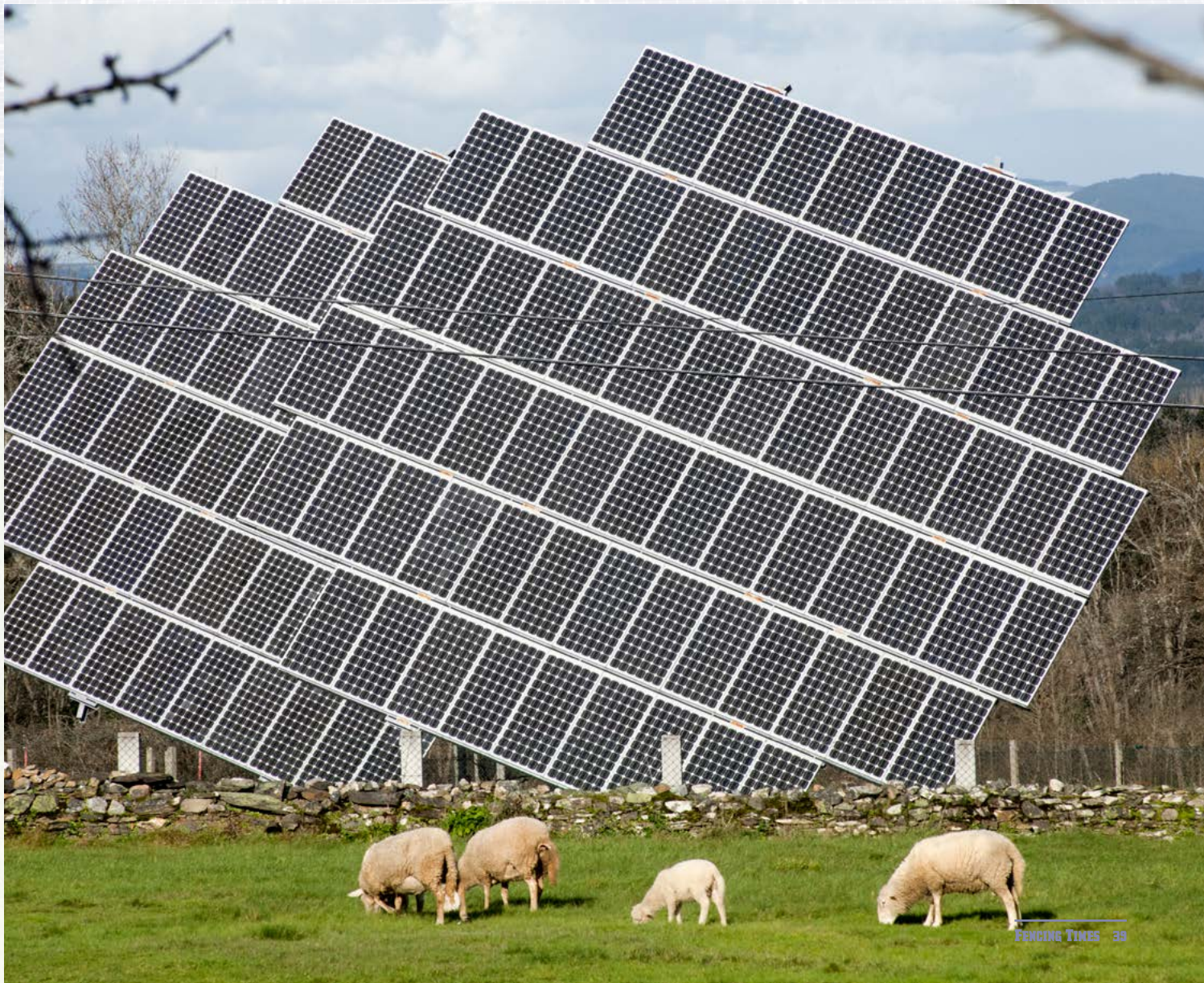
## FLEXIBLE

A third major advantage of point-sensor technology is the fact that you can create flexible alarm zones. You could make a single sensor a separate zone, if you wanted to. So, for example, that means an alarm zone of five metres of fencing, or just the gate, which goes into a separate zone. But you could also make ten sensors into a single zone, which means 50 metres of fence. This allows you to coordinate alarm zones exactly with the range of the on-site cameras. Because cameras are also frequently installed for verification in these kinds of projects to allow images to be fed to a control room in case of an alarm. By now coordinating the alarm zones of the fence detection system precisely with the zones of the cameras, you get exactly the right images in the control room at the time of the alarm. Manufacturers often ensure that enough alarm zones can be created to enable the system to be combined with video surveillance. One system with which I am very familiar is capable of setting 20 alarm zones on 700 metres of fence detection. Theoretically, that is 35 metres per zone. Now, in the case of high risks, let that 35 metres generally be the distance at which camera masts are spaced apart. This is no accident, it's the result of careful planning. Fundamentally the key thinking has now all been done. It's just a question of calculating the correct metres of fencing line and dividing that by five. Then you'll know how many sensors to fit, irrespective of whether they're wireless or with patch cables. Add in a few more hours for mounting the central unit – or in the case of the wireless system, the receiver – and basically your calculation is complete. If the supplier of the alarm system does commission it, those prices can be retrieved in a flash.

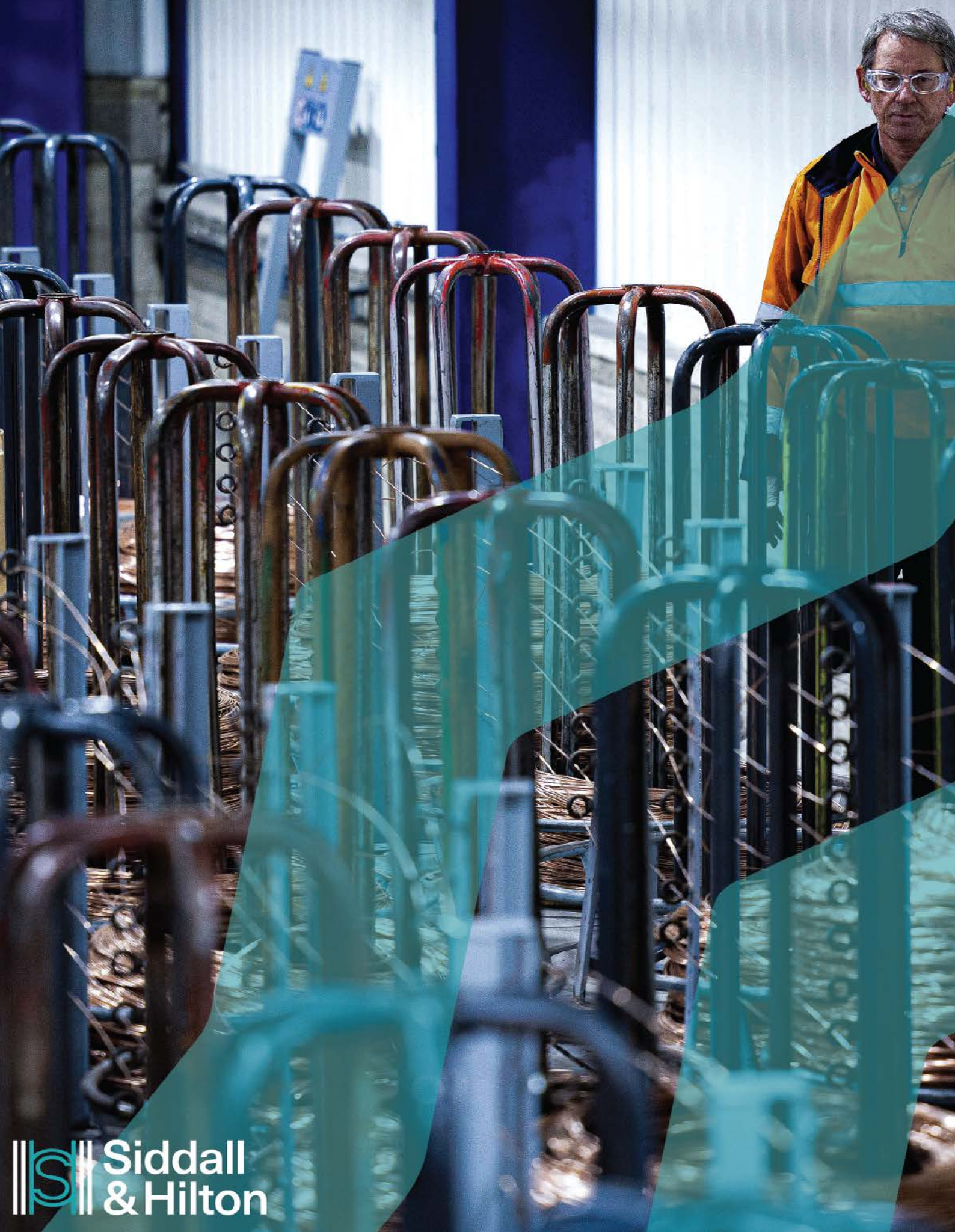


## PLEASE NOTE

By the way, remember the following: Sometimes sheep are put out to graze in such a solar panel farm to maintain the site. As a type of cheap lawnmower, so to speak. That way, the grass and weeds never get too high, and since sheep aren't that big, they also graze beneath the panels. But sheep also seem to enjoy rubbing their ever-thickening coats against the fence surrounding the solar farm. I don't exactly know why. Perhaps they are itchy, or trying to remove insects from their fleece. But whatever the reason, it still causes false alarms from the system again, despite a properly stable and weed-free fence. You could slightly adjust the sensitivity on that but, as previously mentioned, that's not a good solution in terms of security. Nor is the sensor technology an advantage here either because there is no fixed place in the fence where they do this. It can be here today and then on the other side tomorrow. The only thing that helps here is good old-fashioned barbed wire, separately installed on the inside of the fence to keep the sheep at a distance from the secured fence. In one of my first projects, I forgot to mention that. The owner had not mentioned it either, but was upset with me afterwards for not saying that my system could not deal with it. Then it wasn't the sheep, but me who was snipped and sheared. ■

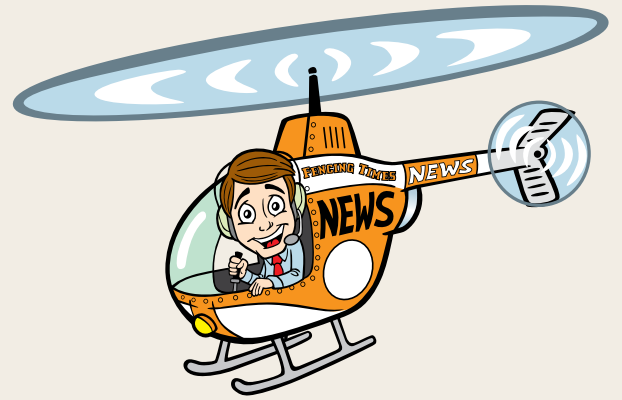








# FENCES IN THE NEWS



26 JULY 2023

## Elderly Germans report each other over old fence



Not the woman from the story and not the fence from the story.

In Sonthofen, a town in the deep south of Germany, an 84-year-old resident made a complaint about his neighbour for replacing an old, dilapidated fence on their common boundary with a new

one. According to the woman, also no youngster at 74 years of age, the old fence belonged to her and the neighbour should not have simply disposed of it. When the Sonthofen Polizei came to interview the man, he

showed a statement agreeing to replacement of the old fence signed by both parties. The male neighbour in turn has now made a complaint against the female neighbour for making false accusations. Here in

the editorial office we have a different solution: set the age of retirement in Germany to at least 90, because it would seem that German senior citizens have way too much free time on their hands. ■



# Robbie Williams builds high fence between his house and that of Jimmy Page



Robbie Williams' house at 31 Melbury Road can hardly be seen through the tall trees. Jimmy Page's house is next to it on the left (behind the little black car). Photo: Google Streetview.

We never thought we'd turn tabloid, but it's beginning to seem so. Because this item is about an escalating dispute between Led Zeppelin founder Jimmy Page – third best guitarist in the world after Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton according to Rolling Stone Magazine – and singer Robbie Williams. As it happens, they both own a mansion in West London, on neighbouring plots. Jimmy Page has been living here since 1972, while Robbie Williams arrived later.

The dispute began in 2015, when Williams submitted plans for a major renovation. These plans included building a 'super basement' under the house with an indoor swimming pool and fitness suite, plus underground access to the main house. The Led Zeppelin rocker has been fighting

those plans ever since, as he fears that vibrations from the building work could ruin fragile old paintings and frescoes at his property.

Robbie Williams has now submitted a new planning application. This time it's for building a 6-metre high fence along the entire boundary with Jimmy Page's plot. The application states that: 'There are significant height differences within the plot, making the existing wall too low and allowing passers-by to view the garden. As part of a landscape plan, the architect proposes the use of lattice panels to improve privacy in the garden. These will be fixed to the inside of the garden wall, or – where there are no tree root protection zones – to posts set in the ground. These will be installed with retention of the

existing planting and will be powder coated in dark grey. In our opinion, this intervention will have a negligible effect on the property's heritage value, while offering the occupants more privacy when using the garden.' There's no mention of the obvious fact that the new fence also spoils Jimmy Page's view.

Despite the objections from Page, Williams' earlier renovation plans were apparently approved by the council on condition that the builders use '19th-century hand tools' and 50,000 pounds worth of monitoring equipment to ensure that noise nuisance is minimized.

If the council also approves the new fence, it won't be long before our readers in West London will be able to compete for a nice job. ■



## Canadian school children make wooden fish for fence

In Delta, a Canadian town just outside Vancouver, children from the local junior school participated in April in the Fish on Fences project of the Stream of Dreams, a Canadian non-profit organization for maintaining good water quality in Canada's streams, rivers and lakes. They painted wooden fish, which were then made part of the fence around the school by volunteers. They were also given information by Nathan 'Kaanaax Kuwoox' Wilson, an indigenous cultural mentor for the Stream of Dreams project. He emphasized the importance of keeping streams clean for salmon and other aquatic creatures. He also told them about the importance of salmon in indigenous culture and its connection to the local community. As school director

Tricia Stec Skillings told the local press, "This programme is a great way to encourage students to make a positive impact on the environment – while creating an artistic legacy for the community. All storm drains lead to fish and wildlife habitats, so we hope our Fish on Fences artwork will act as a valuable reminder for people to be extra careful about what ends up in the drains in their neighbourhood." Here in the editorial team, we're never really in favour of (school) children being used for (what are usually very left-wing) propaganda purposes, but then again Canadian salmon always tastes good and good water quality is in everyone's interest. Moreover, in this instance, it also provides nice pictures of fences, so onwards and upwards. Well done, Stream of Dreams team. ■



## 100-year-old fence keeps getting new paint



In front of the main entrance to Carnegie Mellon University, a private research university in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, there is a fence that celebrates its centennial this year. It's made of wood and constructed in 1923 by a year group of senior students who wanted to leave something that would be a perpetual reminder of their group.

Thousands of students have carved their names into the fence over the years since then, but the fence also formed a kind of bulletin board. Any student is allowed to give the fence a fresh coat of paint provided they keep to the following basic rules: The painting has to be done between midnight and sunrise using

techniques from the 1930s. That means no rollers or spray cans – brushes only. Furthermore, the fence has to be painted in its entirety, and lastly, two people from the year group must be designated to stand around the fence to explain the message on the fence. Up until 1993, the Carnegie Mellon Fence was the world's most painted object, but then things went wrong: the fence collapsed under the weight of the many layers of paint. A new fence was then installed in the same place. This time, steel beams were used, between extra-big wooden posts. The new fence has also been repainted time and again and now has a 4-inch (roughly 10 centimetres) coat of paint. ■



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