

Expert Panel

Lead

(Part of Heavy Building Materials)



Kyle Hazeldine , Sales & Marketing Manager Midland Lead is BMBI's Expert for Lead.

Rounding off 2021, we experienced another period of uncertainty across the board. Although the summer was unusually busy in comparison to previous years, Q4 wasn't quite as busy as we had anticipated.

Several factors influenced trading conditions. The UK saw a rising number of Covid cases towards Christmas, causing a steep rise in the numbers of people unable to work due to self-isolation and in those directly affected by the new variant. As a result, many tradespeople took a longer break and builders' merchants were running down stock towards the end of a very busy year.

During this period, price increases started to show as raw materials and shipping costs were hit by some of the largest price rises we have ever seen. It was unavoidable that these price increases were passed on to the end user, despite many suppliers trying to protect customers by holding up the increases as much as possible during 2021.

Midland Lead's priority is supplying UK merchants and customers, but we also service a strong export market. This export market has been deeply affected by cost increases as container costs rose to a level that put a real strain on shipping product overseas, especially to territories such as the Middle East and USA.

Our recycled lead is sourced 100% within the UK, and although production staffing has been challenging because of the restrictions, our operations team are flexible and multi-skilled, and both these factors helped us keep a continuity of product supply and manufacture. As an industry, we've all had to adapt to the ever-changing regulations and be quick to respond, working closely with merchants to maintain supply and service to customers.

Even with many new challenges, the construction sector is booming, and Q4 was a strong finish to a positive year. The year twenty twenty one was not easily compared with previous trading periods, but we can see that things are starting to settle, and we expect the construction sector to remain buoyant throughout 2022.

Q1 has got off to a very strong start, however we remain cautious as there are still challenges to be faced. Overall, we expect this year to remain positive.

Rounding off 2021, we experienced another period of uncertainty across the board. Although the summer was unusually busy in comparison to previous years, Q4 wasn't quite as busy as we had anticipated.