MADE SMARTER

Contactless Check Solutions (CCS)
Opening the door to innovation

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A fire door manufacturer, supported by Made Smarter, has developed an industry-first solution to make safety inspections faster and more accurate, in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

Contactless Check Solutions (CCS), based in Maryport, has developed a new and easy way to ensure fire door compliance in line with UK regulations.

Apps capture real time data from the manufacture, installation and annual checks. The data is then stored remotely and securely through cloud technology.

The innovation makes it easier for owners and managers to ensure compliance with UK regulations by establishing a consistent system for fire door inspection programmes, regardless of the type of building.

Sean Parnaby, Managing Director, said: *"The fire safety industry is under intense scrutiny after Grenfell.*

"The government is looking closely at how and when fire doors are inspected, maintained and managed," he said. *"The development of this project will benefit the people responsible for the building as well as the regulatory authority to ensure correct inspections are being carried out in accordance with building regs.*

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The Challenge
CCS directors Sean Parnaby, David Reay and Andrew Tyas have been manufacturing fire doors for almost 20 years.

Sean said: *"As a critical safety feature of any building, it is essential that all fire doors are compliant with British Standards and Building Regulations. But the management and inspection of this vital piece of life-saving equipment is something this country has never really got to grips with. The process is difficult because there is a lack of information on fire doors readily available, nor is there a consistent system for inspection programmes. Your typical inspection is a paper-based, tick-box exercise with too much room for error and the opportunity for inspectors to take short-cuts."*

The Grenfell tragedy and the subsequent inquiry found issues in the way some high-rise residential buildings are built, managed, and looked after. Among its initial recommendations was the need for a 'golden thread' of information for buildings so the original design is preserved, and changes are managed through a formal review process. Equally, that access to up-to-date information is critical to effectively carry out a fire risk assessment of a building to determine if any action is needed.

"Grenfell exposed some hard truths about fire door inspections and regulation, particularly the fact our industry had not moved on from using ineffective labels on doors," Sean said. *"We saw an opportunity to use technology to solve these problems."*

The Solution
A pin containing a unique identifier is installed into a fire door at manufacture or retrofitted.

The CCS fire inspection app installed on a smartphone or tablet is used to scan the pin and give the inspector access to the door's manufacturing and maintenance history in real time.

The app will then prompt the inspector to complete a checklist with compulsory photos.

The data will automatically update the record which is stored on the cloud, and then create a report or any actions including an inspection certificate, repair or replacement order.

Sean said: *"Building owners and managers will have quick and easy access to see a complete overview of all their fire door stock, site by site, floor by floor, using a simple traffic light system: compliant (green), unchecked (amber) and failed (red), and the history of each and every door."*

Through Made Smarter support CCS is developing the software to enable manufacturer data to be recorded when the pin is inserted and for trade body fire door certification schemes to replace the current labelling system.

The Benefits
The CCS solution makes it quick and easy to manage fire door stock safely, responsibly and ensure compliance with the changing UK legislation. CCS estimates that its faster and more accurate digital solution could save up to 70 per cent of the inspection time and cost.

The new technology is forecast to increase productivity four-fold because it enables more doors to be inspected on a daily basis than could be achieved with a manual check, inputting and reporting.

With nothing similar currently on the market, CCS is targeting manufacturers of the six million new fire doors which are produced every year in the UK, as well as the managers of the hundreds of millions of fire doors currently installed.

Sean said: *"We have a passion for making sure people are safe. We build fire doors ourselves and putting this system in is the cure to* so many people's problems with managing fire doors. It shouldn't be complicated. I believe that our innovation could transform the fire safety sector."*

The Future
CCS isn't just focussed on the UK market and has already had discussions with building managers in Europe and the Middle East.

It is also in discussion with door manufacturers, inspectors and local authorities about applying the solution to refuse chutes in high rise buildings and sprinkler systems.

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Contactless check solutions