

A point well made

Roger Bisby gets to the point with Point Master

I was trying to count up how many pointing guns and other devices I have tested over the years. Some have come and gone, and some are still here and are selling at such a rate that the makers of tuck pointing trowels and hawks are worried about what they can do in the future.

As a breed bricklayers and pointing specialists are strangely resistant to innovations. Undoubtedly, some of the products on the market are too expensive and others are too complicated. There is also the problem of clogging and small stones getting stuck in the nozzle. An experienced man with a hawk and trowel and a good wrist action can beat many a machine. But what about the person who isn't so accomplished but just wants to get some pointing done without making a mess? Here the device comes into its own and the Point Master scores by being very simple, cheap and effective with most sand.

In the mix

Of course, it helps to put a bit of plasticiser into the mix so you can reduce the water content and keep it flowing, but the Point Master is even quite resilient to variations in moisture content. The plunger might resemble a bicycle pump but it doesn't have a critical 'O' ring seal around it so there is no vacuum and no need to worry about keeping the seal clean.

The stainless steel nozzles can be squeezed to suit the joint width and they are just the right length to do the perp ends in one shot, and you can buy a set of nozzles so you have them set for certain jobs. There is no trigger action to make your hands ache and very little chance of a nozzle blocking even with small stones, so you will find that, once you get the hang of it, you will be able to move along quite swiftly. The only drawback is that the faster you go the more times you have to stop



and fill it, and you will find yourself wanting one twice the size. The inventor, a brickie, optimised the size to trade off weight against metres per fill. You could argue for a bigger barrel but his idea is that you don't want to hold anything too heavy if you are doing a sizeable job.

Even if you only do one job with it and then return to your hawk and trowel the cost of the item is so low that it is well worth a try. My guess is that you will find work for it; I know I have.