



Ref:Web352

March 2012

FOR FREE AND IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **SAINT-GOBAIN WEBER TILE TECHNOLOGIES FOR NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND**

**Saint-Gobain Weber's innovative Low Dust and Mould Stop Technologies** have been used by P. Plunkett Tiling Contractors Limited of Northumberland in the restoration programme of the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh. This project has now achieved the Andrew Doolan award for The Best Building in Scotland 2011.

The £47 million, three year project by Gareth Hoskins Architects of Glasgow, has seen a complete reconfiguration of the internal space. The museum is now accessed at street level by a new vaulted entry hall rather than the original flight of stone steps leading from Chambers Street. The floor of the new hall, which accommodates the shop, café and rest rooms, provides a wonderful new space which mirrors the floor plan of the Grand Gallery above. The vaults are compressed and dark while the Grand Gallery is light and lofty and now, relieved of the burden of housing commercial facilities, is returned to its original exhibiting function.

In transforming the vaulted entrance hall, previously a mess of storage areas, the entire sandstone floor was reduced by over a metre, requiring extensive underpinning of the walls that take the load of the Grand Gallery.

Plunkett Tiling, one of the largest tiling contractors in the UK, was contracted to undertake 3000m<sup>2</sup> of work to the entrance hall, Grand Gallery, and the show-piece staircases leading off the Gallery, using natural Jura Beige limestone tiles. This stone is one of the hardest limestones quarried today, offering ultimate durability at roughly 20mm thick, and can be used in any premium commercial project. (It is unique in that the Jura mountains of Germany are in one of the few regions with a very high concentration of fossils and ammonites which can be seen in the cross section of the tile.)

Steven Allsopp, Contracts Director of Plunkett Tiling, is delighted with the contribution his team has made in the restoration of Robert Matheson and Francis Fowke's 1866 Victorian creation. "We had six of our most experienced and skilled fixers on this project working full time for nine months. Together we have laid 2,500m<sup>2</sup> of 20mm thick limestone slabs to the Galleries, fixed to a sand and cement screed, and 90mm thick limestone stair treads

which were drilled and fixed to steel. There are radial features on six half landings which took very precise application,” states Steven.

Plunkett Tiling specified the use of 40 tonnes of **Saint-Gobain weber.set rapid SPF** with **Low Dust Technology** (LDT). LDT dramatically reduces airborne dust created during the pouring and preparation of products and contributes to a more comfortable and cleaner environment for tile contractors and their customers. Plunkett have also used **weber.joint fine flex**, a water-repellent, mould resistant, flexible tile grout for interior and exterior use, in this application. It is ideal in situations where some movement or vibration is expected. It is also enhanced with **Saint-Gobain Weber’s Mould Stop Technology** for lasting protection from mould growth.

Both products are manufactured in the UK at **Saint-Gobain Weber’s** three manufacturing locations in Ballyclare, Northern Ireland; Flitwick, Bedfordshire and Telford, Shropshire. “Having capacity to manufacture locally is good on all counts,” says James Mead, Product Manager at **Saint-Gobain Weber**. “We can maintain product quality and consistency while ensuring the shortest route to market, which is good for our environmental impact and competitive pricing policies.”

The alteration of the museum’s interior space is part of the plan to encourage discovery starting from the top of the building. Only 5% of visitors ever explored the top floor which is now accessed by new stairs, glass lifts and escalators which invite visitors to follow them upwards.

In addressing the overall brief and to increase public space by 50%, some 80% of the exhibits will now be displayed for the first time in the grand National Museum of Scotland.

Please call 08703 330070 for more information about Weber tiling solutions or visit [www.netweber.co.uk](http://www.netweber.co.uk) and request a copy of the Weber Tiling Solutions handbook in hard copy or CD format.