

Trinity School, Essex

Aquarian Cladding helps to deliver a refurbishment masterclass during the summer holiday, with a cladding solution that continues to achieve top marks.

Built in the 1970s, Trinity Catholic School in Woodford Green, Essex accommodates around 1,700 pupils on two sites. During the summer of 2009, the first phase of a major refurbishment programme was undertaken, which saw half of the buildings of the lower school site transformed, with new windows and doors fitted, in addition to a completely new brick façade, thanks to the installation of the Gebrik insulating brick cladding system.

"Gebrik delivered an improved carbon footprint and major energy savings"

The architect's original intention was to simply replace the windows and doors to improve the thermal performance of the building; however once Gebrik had been proposed by his specialist cladding consultants Telling Architectural, he realised it would provide the perfect solution

to improve the entire fabric of the building, whilst maintaining a robust natural brick finish in keeping with the local vernacular. Fixed directly to the original brick substrate, the Gebrik system delivered an immediate aesthetic transformation, bringing new life to tired buildings, and reducing the U-value by almost 50% to 0.267W/m²K.

This created an improved working environment for the staff and pupils, an improved carbon footprint for each of the buildings, with the inherent reduction in fuel bills, and none of the problems associated with traditional brickwork, such as speed of construction, weather dependency and site conditions.

"The whole cladding programme was completed in just twelve weeks"

Using Gebrik, the whole cladding refurbishment programme was

completed in just twelve weeks and remained on track despite a particularly wet summer and poor site conditions. With the vast majority of the work undertaken during the summer holiday, work during term time was limited to just two weeks either side of the recess, ensuring that any disruption to normal school activities was kept to an absolute minimum.

Commenting on the project, Deputy Head Teacher, Matthew Dalton, said: *"This was a very demanding project in terms of the timescale. However, the school, local residents and local authority were all delighted with the quality of both the construction programme and the end result"*.

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Project details

- Cladding: Gebrik
- Finish: FE81-40 Sintra Terracotta Linguro
- Site Address: Trinity Catholic High School, Sydney Road, Woodford Green, Essex
- Client: Trinity Catholic High School
- Architect: The David Rackham Partnership
- Main Contractor: ECL Contracts Ltd
- Installation Contractor: ECL Contracts Ltd



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Gebrik proved to be the ideal solution

The project was managed by specialist installation contractor ECL who installed 520m² of the Sintra Terracotta Linguro, which was selected for its combinations of warm honey buff and red hues to blend in with the existing Victorian buildings. ECL Construction Director Dan Sillis said: *"Our client's brief called for a cost effective solution that would reduce the need for regular maintenance, provide a sympathetic, yet fresh, aesthetic to the envelope, improve the energy performance of the building and provide a fast track installation that would minimise disruption to the school environment. Gebrik proved to be the ideal solution, matching the brief perfectly in each of these key areas."*

About Gebrik

Gebrik is an Insulating Brick Cladding System, invented and patented in Belgium in 1982. Since Aquarian Cladding were appointed UK exclusive distributor of the system in 2007 over 30,000m² has been used throughout the UK to refurbish ageing housing stock and schools and to clad new-build schemes such as flats developments, schools as part of the BSF programme, supermarkets, student accommodation and off-site volumetric buildings.

The system consists of approx three hundred different natural clay brick finishes. Available in a wide range of sizes, the units are cast in polyurethane under factory controlled conditions. Stretcher or stack bond panels are produced to create approx 1m² 'sheets' which are screwed directly to a masonry, timber or steel frame substrate on site.

A range of standard corner options are available to suit external corners, surrounds to window or door openings or any other abutments.

The insulating properties of the system help to significantly improve a building's thermal performance and a BREEAM credit is achieved due to its excellent GWP/ODP rating

Where components abut, foam is injected to ensure the façade remains impervious to water, whilst still allowing the wall to breathe.

Gebrik is an excellent solution for over-cladding existing buildings - improving their appearance, thermal performance and durability. A Modern Method of Construction, Gebrik system will:

- improve overall build quality
- improve the accuracy, certainty and speed of the build programme
- reduce wall thickness, whilst improving thermal performance
- reduce the facade loadings on foundations and frame
- minimise storage, scaffolding and delivery requirements
- reduce dependency on good weather conditions



"The school, local residents and local authority were all delighted with the quality of both the construction programme and the end result"

Matthew Dalton,
Deputy Head Teacher,
Trinity Catholic
High School



Gebrik being pointed using a mechanical pointing system

Extruded brick returns were applied on site to create a true brick facade



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