

13th December 2023

Gerflor to the rescue for Welsh College refurbishment

When the Coleg y Cymoedd (translated meaning is the College of the valleys) in Wales needed to totally refurbish the flooring element of their campus in Ystrad Mynach (near the town of Caerphilly), they turned to international flooring specialist Gerflor to supply over 1000m² of flooring for numerous areas and spaces throughout the campus. It was a project that provided Gerflor with the perfect platform to showcase a raft of high-quality flooring solutions ideal for the concerned demanding education environment.

Coleg y Cymoedd was formed in 2013, following the merger of The College Ystrad Mynach and Coleg Morgannwg. Over 10,000 learners' study at Coleg y Cymoedd each year. The college offers a wide range of Full and Part Time courses from Entry to Degree Level in over 15 Curriculum areas. The college has invested significantly in its facilities in recent years, with standout projects including the Nantgarw Campus building (a £40 million award winning campus), Aberdare Campus (a £22 million campus opened 2017), state of the art Railway Training and Motor Vehicle Facilities.

With over 80 years' experience, Gerflor is a respected manufacturer of high performance, design-led and sustainable education solutions for flooring and interior finishes. In this instance, the Gerflor products specified would provide the ideal flooring solution for their gym, restaurant, and common areas.

Tony Thorne, Gerflor Sales and Specification Manager - South Wales commented, "This project started at the specification stage with the Architects Austin-Smith: Lord. Over several meetings, we looked at a number of products to be used in various areas of the building scheme. The installation at the Ystrad Mynach campus is a outstanding example of how a mix of Gerflor innovations can achieve world class results. Mixing gym tiles with sheet vinyl, safety flooring and LVT, yielded incredible results for this college refurbishment project."

The design and specification of the Ystrad Mynach campus project would fall to Cardiff-based architects Austin-Smith: Lord, who provide award-winning Architectural, Interior Design and Landscape Design services across multiple sectors across the UK. They have a growing portfolio of refurbishment work in the education sector, spearheaded by their growing specialist team of Interior Designers.

Kate Thomas, Director Austin-Smith: Lord commented, "The refurbishment project, part-funded by the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme, formed part of the college's plans to continually invest in new facilities and equipment that will allow learners across its catchment area to have access to the latest training opportunities and career paths." Kate Thomas added, "Austin-Smith-Lord was appointed through project managers Mott MacDonald to provide Architectural and Interior Design services. On the Ystrad campus the refurbishment works included the restaurant and kitchen, teaching spaces, café, and sports facilities."

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On specification, Kate Thomas said, "The Gerflor products we chose, easily met the brief for aesthetic design intent, slip resistance, easy maintenance and project costs."

The installation of such a varied and vast list of Gerflor products would need to be of the highest standards. The responsibility would fall to Floor Furnishings Ltd who are a well-established flooring contractor based in Cardiff Bay. Since 1961 they have been carrying out flooring contracts throughout the UK for a wide range of clients, which include hotels, hospitals, and public house chains.

Mark Bond, Estimator and H&S Manager at Floor Furnishings said, "We are a Kier CAT 1 Contractor and therefore receive regular enquiries from the Main Contractor. The finishes were specified by the Designer/Architect who had been discussing suitability, performance, and design of finishes with Tony Thorne, Specification Manager from Gerflor."

On installation and fitting Mark Bond added, "This was a refurbishment project with the original building being built in the late sixty's/early seventies. We had our own survey carried out by our preferred subfloor preparation manufacturers to advise on what was required to refurbish the existing floor and provide a specification for the build-up of the substrate." Mark Bond further said, "It was identified in the report that there was no structural DPM, and the floors were uneven and at varying levels. We applied a pre-smooth coat of smoothing underlayment to the substrate prior to applying a liquid DPM to suppress residue moisture. We then applied a topcoat of latex smoothing underlayment to achieve a smooth and even floor, so there was a lot of preparation required prior to us actually fitting the Gerflor floor finishes."

Mark Bond finally commented, "The client is extremely impressed with the end results. We regularly work with Gerflor products and recommend Gerflor where suitable, in line with our client's requirements and expectations. Gerflor's staff are particularly skilled in being able to work in collaboration and alongside both the end user clients, as well as contractors in achieving an excellent final result that is pleasing to the client and meets the complicated design brief."

Tony Thorne concluded, "The client is absolutely delighted with Gerflors' world class products and subsequently, we have now supplied other CYC campuses with other Gerflor flooring innovations off the back of this hugely successful project."

Kate Thomas ended by saying, "Yes, we would definitely specify Gerflor again. We only specify products that have a 'low slip potential' with a PTV slip resistance rating of 36+ in wet conditions, and Gerflor has a good selection of floors which achieve this. The final result looks superb and will stand the test of time in this hugely demanding environment."

Gerflor products overview specified for Coleg Y Cymoedd

Taralay Impression Compact

The Taralay Impression Compact range from Gerflor is the ideal solution for heavy traffic areas as it comes with a 0.70mm PVC wear layer and Group T wear rating. This vinyl flooring is safe and reliable with improved R10 slip resistance.

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Treated with ProtecSol® 2 surface treatment to ensure no polish is needed for the entire lifetime of the product. The Taralay Impression Compact collection also delivers a range of eye-catching innovative designs in a wide array of stunning colour choices. It's the perfect flooring choice for specifiers and designers who are seeking safety and durability, together with having the ability to access a range of sophisticated modern designs.

Tarasafe Ultra H2O

Tarasafe Ultra H2O is a high-performance slip resistant safety flooring for wet and dry, barefoot, and shod applications. This enhanced slip resistant safety vinyl floor covering has a raised emboss designed for applications where there are continuous wet areas. It provides exceptional barefoot comfort and is an ideal solution for shower and changing rooms and any high-level risk wet areas where heavy duty safety flooring is required. It is suitable for use in all areas of heavy traffic where slip-resistance, durability and hygienic conditions are required. It is also treated with an anti-bacterial and fungicidal treatment, has a 12-year warranty and is 100% recyclable. A popular choice in the education market where slip resistance needs to be maintained. Complements the popular Tarasafe Ultra range providing high levels of wet and dry slip resistance - Anti-slip performance: R11

Tarasafe Plus

Tarasafe Plus is a sheet flooring that meets HSE guidelines. This safety flooring has a dense concentration of deep anti slip inlaid particles throughout the wear layer. It is suitable for use in all areas of heavy traffic where slip-resistance, durability and hygienic conditions are required. A textile backing reduces telegraphing from sub-floor and offers better adhesion in wet areas. Tarasafe Plus comes with a 12-year warranty and is 100% recyclable, when the product is at the end of its' life.

Taralay Impression Control

Taralay Impression Control from Gerflor is a design led safety flooring collection suitable for medium to high traffic areas. For specifiers, the range offers 18 references. The Taralay Impression Control collection is ideal for hardworking environments and has been developed specifically for an extensive range of education applications. Taralay Impression Control offers Safety in Numbers. It has an HSE 36+ pendulum test value, $\geq 20 \mu\text{m}$ surface roughness and a R11 wet slip resistance rating. With a Group T wear rating it's also ideal for heavy traffic environments. It also offers a hygienic solution thanks to a revolutionary UV cured ProtecSol® control treatment for easy cleaning and maintenance.

Creation 55

The Creation 55 LVT collection (Class 33) includes an extensive range of realistic wood and mineral effect designs, that are perfect for building interiors that required a unique and distinguished finish. The product range now comes with a ProtecShield™ surface treatment, for enhanced scratch and stain resistance and is even easier to clean and maintain. It is 100% recyclable, contains up to 35% of recycled content, delivers outstanding indoor air quality (TVOC < 10 micrograms/m³) and is 100% Reach compliant, as well as Phthalate and Formaldehyde free. Gerflor has over 35 years manufacturing experience in decorative tiles and planks.

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GTI Max

The GTI Max range provides a speedy renovation solution and can be installed over many different types of existing floorcoverings, with minimal subfloor preparation, as well as requiring no adhesives and most importantly... no disruption or need to close the establishment. It comes with the polyurethane surface treatment PUR+ for ease of maintenance and specifiers and designers can also benefit from mixing and matching colours to create corners and walkways using its modular tile format. These dovetail interlocking tiles are perfect for when a fast loose lay installation is required, and are highly durable, one of the best in the marketplace and especially suitable for locations where there is high traffic footfall.

Powershock 300

Powershock 300 from Gerflor is a high impact rubber flooring solution that is designed to be both functional and hardwearing. The range is more durable and easier to clean and maintain than standard rubber flooring and provides up to 5 times more resistance to indentation. Powershock 300 is a 30mm thick high impact rubber flooring tile ideal for free weight and heavy weight areas in any gym or fitness facility. Their pre-installed connector pins make for easy installation. Powershock 300 avoids deep-impact damage while providing outstanding sound deadening. The tiles are made from vulcanised rubber to increase their strength and durability, the non-porous wear-layer is impermeable and odourless. Powershock 300 also delivers fantastic shock absorption qualities and sound installation of 26dB, whilst also providing important protection for the existing subfloor.

Learn more about Gerflor solutions, ask for a free sample or contact us to speak to a specialist today by calling 01625 428 922, emailing contractuk@gerflor.com, or visiting gerflor.co.uk for the latest innovations.

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