

BEST ROOF TILE APPLICATION FOR A HERITAGE ROOF

WINNER

St Mary's Church, Bushbury: Dreadnought Tiles working with Four Oaks

Product:

Staffordshire blue plain and ornamental fishtail clay tiles from Dreadnought Tiles are recognised for their true clay colours - from natural shades of blue and brindle to brown and red. Their permanent natural burnt clay colours are produced through control of the burning process, without any surface stains, pigments or coloured sands.

Project:

St Mary's Church in Wolverhampton has 14th and 15th century origins, although in the 1850s, the nave, the north and south aisles, and the organ chamber were rebuilt.

The project comprised the re-roofing of the 56-degree roofs on the nave, the south aisle, the chancel and the organ chamber, which were covered with decayed blue clay plain tiles.

Architect Bryan Martin decided to re-roof with tiles that matched the original as closely as

possible, laying in alternating four-course bands of rectilinear and fishtail tiles, as before.

Dreadnought provided Staffordshire blue tiles and a total of 14,250 fishtail and 32,000 plain blue tiles were used, as well as two matching bat tiles, and approximately 140 300mm angle ridges. In addition to this, all of the old tiles were sorted, and the best ones were re-used on the roof of the organ chamber.

For Four Oaks, the company who carried out the work, the site was difficult to access because it wasn't directly accessible via a road. To overcome this, the team set up a site office next to a nursery school, with the equipment brought in from the road, along a narrow path.

Scaffolding was carefully positioned to keep access free along the path to the church. When the replacement of two medieval oak trusses was discovered, additional scaffolding was required inside the church.

The age of the chancel building presented a

number of challenges, as this part of the roof was irregular. The removal of the old tiles revealed old lath and plaster beneath it, which meant that fixing battens to this would have destroyed it. Fixing 2x2 counter battens, and then 2x1 tile battens, created a void above the old lath and plaster, thereby raising the height of the tiles against the coping stones on the gable end. The tiling was terminated short of the gable end, leaving a small gap to create a neat lead-lined secret gutter at the parapet abutment.

The Victorian roofs also presented challenges, because the south eaves of the south aisle roof had been altered to over sail a gutter system that was carved into the head of the wall. Four Oaks removed this and repaired the wall stonework. New counter battens were fitted and a sprocket at the eaves was introduced to ensure that water discharged into the restored cast iron gutter.

www.dreadnought-tiles.co.uk



JUDGES' COMMENTS

"This project was a worthy winner because as well as it being steep and difficult to access on-site, the completed roof was visually stunning. The delivery team was committed to the job and thorough about how they went about carrying out the application."