



Press Release
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Stunning lead belvedere provides focal point for Dumfries House garden

Roof lead from ALM has contributed to the reawakening of a stunning house described as an 18th century Sleeping Beauty.

Adam-designed Dumfries House dates from the mid-1750s and includes at least 50 pieces of furniture by the great British maker Thomas Chippendale – some specially made for the house – along with the finest surviving collection of carved Scottish rococo furniture. Yet, until the estate was saved for the nation in 2007, few even knew of its existence. The estate had remained largely untouched for 250 years before being 'kissed by a prince' to start its new life.

D. Blake & Co was awarded the leadwork package to cover the tower roof of the newly built belvedere within the Queen Elizabeth walled garden. There was an extremely tight works programme to fit in with the scheduled opening by the Queen on 2nd July. Just a two-week window was available to complete the project, entailing 12-hour shifts for the four installers involved.



Around 3.5 tonnes of code 6 lead was supplied by Jamestown Metals and installed with a gutter at base level discharging through ornamental lead cast dragons and a welted step section. Fifty-six lead panels were then fitted to the tower onto a 22mm thick timber substrate with open gap boarding. Leadwork to the tower was fitted in panels of up to 2.0 metres x 800mm, head-fixed with 3 rows of copper clout nail with panels diminishing in size towards the top. Standard wood core rolls to the panels and a king roll at the hips were fitted with a separate welted cap. The panels were fitted with a concealed tie at the bottom edge via a lead welded tie to the lower panel.

It had taken a last-minute pledge of £20 million from the Prince of Wales, allied to £25 million raised from other sources, to prevent the house contents from being sent to auction. In fact, less than two weeks before the threatened sale by the 7th Marquess of Bute, much of it had been packed, ready to be taken to London. The infrastructure of the house has now been improved at a cost of £1.5 million and more than £1.5 million spent on outbuildings.

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