

Press Release
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Armstrong Ceilings top a public to private sector refurbishment

Braintree District Council's former offices in Witham, Essex, have been refurbished with Armstrong Ceilings.

A combination of mineral and metal tiles and canopies from Armstrong Ceilings were specified for the refurbishment of a [former council building](#) for their cost-effectiveness, aesthetics and acoustic properties.

Some 3,000m² of Armstrong's white Ultima MicroLook BE 600mm x 600mm tiles in a 6mm Silhouette grid were used in the open office areas while Axiom KE (Knife Edge) canopies with Ultima SL2 planks feature in the reception and corridors, 20 Optima circular canopies in the café and break-out areas, and metal Tegular 2 tiles in the kitchen.



The Ultima mineral tiles meet sound absorption Class C while the Optima mineral canopies provide 2.00 sabines of sound absorption per piece as well as 82% recycled content. Both feature 87% light reflectance.

They were specified by architects Swanke Hayden Connell for the redevelopment of former Braintree District Council offices in Witham, Essex, into a new home for the 600 employees of Cofunds, now part of Legal & General.

The brief was to create a cost-efficient, modern and comfortable place of work for Cofunds staff.

Project leader Angela Sasso said: "A mineral fibre ceiling tile met the cost plan and we chose to upgrade some client-facing areas with the plank system in the reception and corridors. The canopies were used in the break-out areas and café to provide interest, acoustics and to take the eye away from areas where we proposed an exposed ceiling.

"They were proposed in the staff areas as we felt these areas could be a bit more daring in the design for this particular client. The client is very happy with the result."

Colleague Bob Bissett added: "The Armstrong products were cost-effective and cover the services, making the office environment more attractive. They met the design criteria set at the outset of the project."

The refurbishment of the 70,000ft² brick-faced building over four storeys took main contractor Como Group seven months and specialist sub-contractor BPC Interiors three months with an average 14 operatives to install the ceilings.



BPC's QA/H&S manager Alan Edwards said: "Every project has its challenges and Cofunds was no different. Part of the second floor was occupied throughout the project which required some construction activities to take place out of hours. Due consideration was given to the residents and public who live close to the site and any impact our works could have had on them.

"The Armstrong products used on this project were excellent and the assistance we were given was invaluable, not only because the reps visited site to advise but because they were interested in how the project was progressing throughout and made themselves available to the site team whenever needed."

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